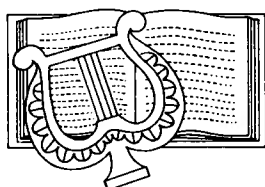






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Ruth Candler Lovett

1935-1964









**GERALDINE :**  
**A TALE OF CONSCIENCE.**

**VOL. II.**

**A**



GERALDINE :  
A TALE OF CONSCIENCE.

BY

E. C. A.

VOL. II.

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“ In necessariis unitas, in dubiis libertas, in omnibus caritas.”

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# GERALDINE :

## A TALE OF CONSCIENCE.

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### CHAPTER I.

To-morrow for fresh fields and pastures new.

MILTON'S *Lycidas*.

THE long and smiling days of summer had now passed, and with them the first months of a bright autumn ; the rides and drives were over, and home occupations increased in interest. Geraldine, ever full of resources, and perfectly happy in the society of her two chosen friends, continually occupied also in the pursuit of Catholic knowledge, and each day hoping to have an interview with the priest of Elverton, without compromising Mr. Everard, was sorry to be disturbed in her retirement by an invitation, which almost amounted to a command, as coming from her father's bosom friend, and her godfather, the Earl of Hungerford. It had been arranged between General Carrington and his Lordship, that, whenever Dr. Sinclair should be compelled to return to Oxford, Geraldine should

remove to Sedgemoor Priory, and the illness of Lady Hungerford had alone prevented the fulfilment of this engagement—thus enabling the little party at the Hall to continue several weeks longer together.

“If you accept this invitation to the Priory,” cried Miss Graham, much distressed, “you will be meeting again with all those Catholics—Lady Winefride Blount, the Countess Angela, and all that set. For you know that Lord Hungerford piques himself on his liberality, and, provided he could indulge in his joke and his laugh, would willingly have the Pope on his right, and the Grand Mufti on his left hand, every Sunday at dinner !”

“Oh! that Countess Angela,” cried Geraldine, suddenly recovering from the annoyance which this summons to the Priory had given her; “do you really think I shall meet her there?”

The colour mounted into Katherine’s cheeks; but she did not express, for she could scarcely define, the vexation of her feelings.

“If I could hope,” continued Geraldine, “that at length I should see and converse with this gifted creature, whom all seem to revere and cherish, I would willingly remove to Sedgemoor during the winter months, especially as Lord Hervey is abroad, and I take you and Mr. Everard with me. You know, Kate,” added she, laughing

and caressing her friend, "that you cannot find it in your heart to desert me, when exposed to fresh dangers from Pópery!"

Miss Graham was still silent; for she could not determine with her conscience whether or not to accept the invitation given her, as Miss Carrington's friend, to pass the Christmas at Sedgemoor Priory, where the family were scarcely strict enough for her principles. However, before the return of Lord Hungerford's groom with Geraldine and Mr. Everard's letters, she gratified her friend by consenting: her generous desire to be a continual monitor to Geraldine in the midst of Catholic attraction and proselytism, determining her to brave the crowd of strangers, and all that she expected to dislike, in the projected change from the Protestant to the Catholic side of the county.

"My dear sir," said Geraldine to Mr. Everard, when they met after the departure of the letters,— "you are now to be rewarded for all your self-denial. Long ere this you would have joined the sporting party at Sedgemoor, and all the excitement of their political, scientific, and humorous 'table talk,' but for me."

"Well! well!" said he, "where is the merit of lingering here, if metal more attractive be found at Elverton than at Sedgemoor?"

"And what day have you fixed for leaving the Hall, Geraldine?" said Miss Graham.



“On the day previous to Lady Hungerford’s birth-day, which falls on Tuesday week, the tenth of December, and which has always been celebrated in a joyous though quiet manner at Sedgemoor. So that we have nearly a fortnight to pass together in our happy retirement, during which time, Kate, we may finish the many pretty beginnings we have made, in the abundance of our summer leisure,—amongst other things, your view of the valley church, and my bust of my father.”

This bust of General Carrington had been begun several months previously to his leaving England, during the last season passed with his daughter at their residence in Berkeley Square, where, taking advantage of those early hours which in London are rarely interrupted, Geraldine had succeeded in producing a most spirited likeness of her father, which she hoped to place in the opposite niche to one occupied by a bust of her lamented mother in the great hall at Elverton. The work had been executed during a tour for health in Italy, in the last year of Mrs. Carrington’s life, by the matchless hand of Canova, and an artist of more experience than our heroine would have shrunk from the competition: but Geraldine, in the same awakened perception of latent genius which produced the famous “*Ed anch’io son pittore!*” and in the simplicity of her filial piety, boldly modelled, from the head which she thought all perfection, a

copy full of genius and full of faults. It had been the task of the talented sculptor Behnes to point out the latter,—and Geraldine had at length carried down to the Hall a cast, which, during some weeks, she kissed by day and dreamed of by night, until that admiring yet true critic, Mr. Everard, objected to a fold in the drapery, and smilingly watched the undaunted courage with which Geraldine now brought to light again her original model, and worked anew on the drapery till even he was satisfied. It now only remained to pack up this original model, and send it where fresh casts might be taken; and as Geraldine herself undertook this with Mr. Everard, “How strange it is,” said she, “that my late theological studies are so wound round this dear work of my hands, that I cannot look at the one without recalling the other! And yet, alas! I fear that they are sworn foes, not friends; and within these last few weeks especially,” added she, looking round to be secure from listeners, “I have had sad forebodings of my father’s dire wrath, against what he will think an unpardonable surrender of my former principles.”

“So long as you continue to conform to all your former habits and duties, and to keep your more enlarged knowledge to yourself,” replied Mr. Everard, “the General will care but little for these vague rumours of your inclination for Catholicity.”

“But he will care for my actually becoming a Catholic,” said Geraldine.

“To be sure he will; but you cannot think such a step necessary,” said the old gentleman. “Consider your promise to stay by the Church of England, untill you shall have fulfilled all her precepts and counsels, which you have never yet done; and then to reflect, whether you do not serve the cause of true religion more by giving a firm and public testimony of reformed Catholicity in your own community, than by throwing your warm heart and powerful intellect into that side of the scale which needs you not. Converts from either Church are exactly what would mar my great, my comprehensive scheme of universal concession, and universal union. No! girl, no!—Have strength of mind enough to remain where you are, and revive the energies of that part of the Universal Church in which you were born. I have great reliance, added he, “on the intermarriages which of late years are constantly taking place between the members of the sister Churches.—Pray, do you know the young Countess de Grey?”

“Not yet personally,” replied Geraldine, “but I hope to meet her at the Priory.”

“You must give up that hope. Our pretty Angela visits nowhere during Advent; and then come all the Christmas festivals, which Catholics

love to keep amongst themselves. She will probably then be at Burnleigh, where they muster a pretty large congregation of 'the faithful!' I wish that Lord Hervey may return from the Continent, and be introduced to her before Lent; for I want him to marry her, and not you; while you would do well to think of Eustace de Grey!"

Geraldine here laughed too much, to please Mr. Everard; who vindicated himself by—"Well! I maintain that marriages between those of different communions do the cause of true religion great service, by inducing constant concession and forbearance, and by compelling an acquaintance with each other's faith. Angela de Grey has hitherto refused to marry, and report assigns different motives for this conduct. Some say there is a private engagement between her and Eustace, others say she is at heart a nun!"

"But why tell me what others say," said Geraldine; "when, as the friend of the family, you must know more than the public?"

"How can I be expected," replied he, "to know what the lady probably does not herself know—her own mind?"

The old man said this with unusual testiness, and Geraldine was debating whether she might venture to inquire the cause, when morning visitors were announced, and no opportunity again occurred of renewing this delicate subject, before

the party from Elverton Hall started, on the ninth of December, for their winter quarters.

The journey occupied but a few hours, and, with the early dusk, the two ladies, with their attendants, drove under the gothic archway of Sedgemoor Priory. Another travelling carriage had preceded their's during the last mile, which had been so attentively watched by Geraldine, at each turn of the road, that Miss Graham had laughingly inquired, whether, from crucifixes and missals starting from the trunks and imperials, or whether, from the particular trot of the horses, she expected to ascertain that Catholics or Protestants were to alight from the equipage before them?

On entering the house, Geraldine and Katherine, according to the custom of the Priory, were at once conducted to their rooms, where Lady Hungerford came to bid them welcome, embracing Geraldine with the warmest affection, and then turning to Katherine with graceful courtesy, which appeared to elicit but a stiff and cold return from that lady, who continued to endure, rather than to respond to, the polite reception given her as Geraldine's friend. At length, Lady Hungerford withdrew to her toilette, and the friends were left again alone.

"Katherine," said Geraldine, "I trust you are not thinking it necessary to be disagreeable during your stay here, from a mistaken feeling of religious

strictness? I know that your consent to this visit proceeded from friendship to me; but, trust me, the sacrifice will be very incomplete, unless you be disposed to take my friends upon trust, as they take you."

"Geraldine," replied Miss Graham, "I do not expect to be popular with these fashionable and ungodly friends of yours, but I shall just steer my own course, and adhere to my own principles, by the grace of God."

"And God forbid you should ever do otherwise!" said Geraldine; "but it is perfectly compatible with the strictest adherence to principle, to be gentle and indulgent to others, however you may differ from them in opinion. Christian humility must ever produce that true politeness of the heart, which is directly opposed to your present self-righteous contempt of those whose guest you are. How do you know that they are 'ungodly?' You cannot read their hearts!"

"I have never personally known this family," replied Katherine, "but I have heard much of them from Major Tankerville, the chosen friend of Lord Hervey, their truly pious and afflicted son."

"Afflicted!" cried Geraldine, smiling; "what do you mean? Lord Hervey has long since recovered the death of his wife, to the great satisfaction of his family, and has no other woe of which you, Katherine, are likely to be aware."

“He surely has the affliction of a Christian son, in seeing his aged parents in all the worldliness which he has renounced. Major Tankerville assured me, that the example of their son, so far from arousing them from their sleep of death, had only alienated them still more from every thing serious.”

“I cannot be surprised at this alienation,” said Geraldine, “for not only was Lord Hervey, in the first ardour of his conversion, perfectly overbearing in his pharisaical treatment of his parents, but the mistaken friends, by whom he was then surrounded, conducted themselves still more rudely,—without tact, without taste, without feeling. As for Major Tankerville, his praise-God manner, that ‘*he* is not as other men are,’ always disgusted me, even during my own inflated days. The last time we met was when he accompanied Lord Hervey, in a morning visit to me, in Berkeley Square, when, inquiring after several families in this neighbourhood, he turned to Lord Hervey, and added,—“And the old couple at the Priory—any hopes there? any ‘shaking of the dry bones?’”

“Ladies,” interposed Mrs. Kelsoe, who now appeared, in high spirits, and supremely well dressed, “the first bell has rung; and you have never yet answered me, Miss Carrington, as to the black satin and the pink chalis?”

“Kelsoe, tell me who are in the house as visitors?” inquired Geraldine, as she made choice of one of the dresses held before her.

“Why, ma’am, I have had but a moment’s sight of Mrs. Bruce; however, I believe I heard all about the company at present here. Only one arrival of the old set, as it were, besides the county families. The carriage just before us was Sir John and Lady Anne Scotney’s; and his sister, Miss Scotney, is come with them.”

“Well, but the families of the neighbourhood?” interrupted Geraldine.

“Colonel Torrington’s family, and Lady Winefride Blount, is all, I think, ma’am.”

“Oh!” cried Geraldine, “then *she* is actually here: make haste, Kelsoe, I believe it is really late!”

The toilet now proceeded in silence, and the half-hour had expired, when, with the usual symptoms which foretold that she had some intelligence to impart, Mrs. Kelsoe began,—“There is another arrival expected late to-night, Miss Carrington, which I suppose will interest and concern you more than the coming of any old Roman lady: but this arrival is to be a secret from Lady Hungerford, and to surprise her on her birth-day. So long as you must have known, ma’am, the hopes of this noble family, I thought it best to prevent you being taken unprepared, which, for young ladies, is not pleasant—though, to be sure, I don’t suppose my Lord would show himself to-night.”

Geraldine’s heart beat violently, though not



with pleasure. "You mean, I conclude, Kelsoe, that Lord Hervey is expected to arrive to-night from the Continent?"

"Yes, ma'am; my lord's valet wrote word to the housekeeper to have all in readiness for to-night, but on no account to mention it: at least so Mrs. Bruce told me."

"A well kept secret!" observed Geraldine, smiling.

"Ma'am," said Mrs. Kelsoe, "I thought it right to tell you, that you might be on your guard; for I have my own reasons for supposing that my lady's birth-day is but a cover for meeting you, Miss Carrington, who can't receive visitors now at the Hall; and I have not lived as lady's-maid all my life without ascertaining that young ladies prefer knowing of a surprise beforehand."

The last bell now rang, and Geraldine, with Miss Graham, descended to the drawing-room, which they found well filled. The first object to Geraldine was Lord Hungerford, whom she had not seen since her father's departure, and whose feeling towards her was truly paternal. He was evidently watching for her entrance, and his hearty embrace, as he welcomed her to her second home, brought the tears into her eyes, and produced a benevolent smile on the countenance of the person with whom his Lordship had been conversing, and who proved to be the identical "old Roman lady,"

whose arrival had so much gratified Geraldine, and alarmed Mrs. Kelsoe, namely, the Lady Winefride Blount. Geraldine was reassured by that smile, and by the extended hand of recognition, that she had not been classed, and then forgotten, with the host of young fashionables, whom her ladyship had necessarily mixed with and endured, during the London season of their first acquaintance. No time, however, was now permitted for conversing, even on the lightest topics, as the interchange of civilities with well known acquaintances, and introductions to the few strangers present, occupied Geraldine's unwilling attention, till the general move to the dining-room. Amongst these strangers was a travelled author, whose quarto, just published, had been dedicated to Lord Hungerford, but had remained unnoticed until that morning, when, suddenly remembering the arrival of Mr. ———, her ladyship, ever full of the proprieties of life, had hastily cut the leaves open, read the heads of the chapters, and now politely led the conversation to the contents of the book in question. This was conducted with good taste and discrimination, and, as several persons were present, who possessed tact sufficient to follow the clue given, much information was elicited by those who had witnessed the scenes described by the traveller, and whose impressions differed just

enough to produce animated discussion. Geraldine, who was seated nearly opposite to this gentleman, found her attention much divided throughout the dinner, by the classical and religious allusions made to the temples and tombs of Italy by those around her, at the same time that she could not help being amused by the visionary projects of a young German Baron, seated next to her, whose actual belief in astrology made her fancy herself retrograding to the middle ages. At length, the stars and the Baron were totally forgotten; and she gave an undivided and solicitous attention to the classical tourist, as these words caught her ear:—“Our Lady-day, the term being retained from Romish times, is precisely the day heretofore dedicated to Cybele, and, in fact, the greater the research the greater the proof, that the ancient “Mother of the Gods,” and the modern “Mother of God,” differ in nothing but in name and in date.

Something was then said which Geraldine did not hear; but the travelled author continued with, —“Any one, acquainted with the Italian character and temperament, would see nothing extraordinary in their retaining their pagan idolatry, and, with a mere change of appellation, continuing to the fair portion of heaven a chivalrous obedience. In short, at every step in Italy, the classical tra-

veller is reminded of the ancient mythology, and clearly traces the connexion between the pagan and popish rites!"

Geraldine here stole a glance at Lady Winefride Blount; but, before she could ascertain whether the smile which played on the old lady's countenance had been caused by this speech, the signal was given by the disconcerted Lady Hungerford, for the gentle sex to retire to smaller and safer topics in the drawing-room. When there, her ladyship imparted, in an admonitory whisper, to the few who were unacquainted with Lady Winefride, that her valued old friend certainly had the misfortune to be a Catholic, but that really she was so sensible, and so well informed, and liberal, that they would find her just like other people!" To this last tribute Geraldine was by no means disposed to agree. She thought Lady Winefride very unlike "other people," and wished much to ascertain whether her characteristics were really owing to originality of character, or to circumstance and position;—how much of the unbending carriage, the reserved though kind manner, the rare but intelligent smile, belonged to the woman, and how much to the Catholic in a Protestant land? Geraldine was not able, however, to fix these precise limits on that evening.

The circle of coffee drinking ladies remained unbroken until the entrance of the gentlemen,

when Lady Winefride was soon engaged as Lord Hungerford's partner at whist, and Geraldine, surrounded by old acquaintances, who had in priority of date a greater claim to her attention, was borne away to the musical instruments, in spite of her wish to hear the conversation between Mr. Everard and the author, which was taking place at the other end of the room. Geraldine, however, resolved to question her learned old friend, respecting the accuracy of the traveller's sweeping assertions, and, with this hope in view, dismissed all deep thought, until, music and cards, and conversation being over, the party dispersed, and she found herself mounting the staircase at the same time with Lady Winefride Blount. "Has the clock struck twelve?" audibly whispered Lady Hungerford's maid to another woman, as the ladies passed.

"Just on the stroke, Mrs. Bruce," replied the female addressed.

"Then tell Monsieur Bigôt that Lord Hervey had better mount at once to my lady's room, for it will be the tenth of December, and her birth-day, before they meet," added the chief speaker.

"I have unintentionally become party to an interesting little family secret," said Lady Winefride to Geraldine, as she stopped at the door of her room; "but to *you*, Miss Carrington, nothing relating to Lord Hervey could, I presume, be well

a secret?" and, as she said this, Lady Winefride threw the full light of her taper on Geraldine's countenance. Taken thus by surprise, our heroine replied eagerly,—“I was told that he was coming; but indeed, Lady Winefride, it is nothing to me!—that is”—added she, with more embarrassment of tone, and with all the vexation of being unable to prevent herself from colouring deeply, when she least wished it,—“that is,—I should much wish for the privilege of being admitted to converse with your ladyship alone to-morrow, if not inconvenient.”

“With me?” exclaimed Lady Winefride, in evident surprise; “shall you have time for me on such a day as to-morrow? Well, Miss Carrington, be it so. You have but to tap at my door to gain instant and welcome admittance. Till then, good night, and ‘benedicite!’”

## CHAPTER II.

Is this a time for moonlight dreams  
Of love and home, by mazy streams,  
For fancy, with her shadowy toys,  
Aerial hopes, and pensive joys?

*Keeble.*

Mrs. KELSOE did not belie her usual penetration, when she affirmed that Lady Hungerford's birthday was but the minor motive for Lord Hervey's change of plan, and for his sudden re-appearance at the Priory, when, by his last letters, all had seemed arranged for his continuing at Geneva. The truth was, that, so long as Geraldine Carington remained a recluse at Elverton, his lordship, feeling that all was safe, respecting his hoped for alliance with her, and unable in propriety to be a visitor at the Hall, during the absence of its master, had resolved that, in the interval of the ensuing months, he would complete a work, which he had begun at the solicitation of his London evangelical friends, illustrative of the present state of parties at Geneva, and which, from his introductions to the leading controversialists there, was

best to be effected on the spot. When, however, by Lady Hungerford's last despatch, he discovered that Miss Carrington had consented to join the Christmas party at Sedgemoor Priory, and that, amongst the numerous guests expected, several formidable competitors might start for the same prize, Lord Hervey resolved to leave the subtleties of polemics, for a few weeks at least; and, as he must give some reason for his change of mind, he determined, as he rapidly returned on the Calais road, to take a prominent part in the public meetings in aid of the Reformation Society, to be held in —shire, of which his lordship had received due notice, with strong appeals to his zeal and personal influence.

Notwithstanding Geraldine's anxiety to speak in private with Lady Winefride Blount, their meeting was rendered impossible by Lady Hungerford's demands on Geraldine's time and attention, not only during the birthday, but for the two following days; and it was not until the fourth evening after her arrival that, on leaving the dining room at a later hour than usual, Lady Winefride drew Geraldine's arm within her own, and led her to her room, where, stirring the fire into an encouraging blaze, and seating her young friend in a chair opposite to her own, the old lady began playfully,—“As you have ventured, of your own free will, into the confessional, my dear Miss



Carrington, I trust that you will let me fully know how far I can be useful to you. Trust me," added she, more gravely, "that I should consider it a privilege, and one that would interest my feelings most deeply, could I hope that in any way I might promote your happiness."

"You *can* promote my happiness, dear Lady Winefride," cried Geraldine, "and I have longed for this opportunity, to tell you that, having thought and studied much, since we last met,—I am almost a Catholic!"

"A Catholic!" repeated Lady Winefride, in evident astonishment. "My dear Miss Carrington—you surprize—I might almost say you terrify me!"

"I did not think that this communication would have so much startled you," said Geraldine. "I thought it possible that your ladyship's nephew, Sir Eustace De Grey, might have told you of my deep interest in the subjects discussed between himself and our mutual friend, Mr. Everard, and that each had supplied me with books to instruct my ignorance, and disarm my prejudice."

"No!" replied Lady Winefride very gravely. "It is true that Eustace has frequently spoken of Miss Carrington, as she must be spoken of by all who know her: but I was never made acquainted with your studies, or with the share he may have had in promoting them. On the contrary, I be-

lieved his thoughts to be far differently engaged, and that, contented with your own communion, yours had been exclusively turned to the brilliant prospects, and domestic happiness, awaiting you, as the wife of Lord Hervey."

"My friends," replied Geraldine, "have settled my future destiny with but little knowledge of the mental change, which would make a connexion with this family impossible, even supposing it to be desired by the chief person concerned, of which I beg to assure your ladyship I have had no proof."

"But allow me to assure you, with equal frankness," said Lady Winefride, "that I, as an unprejudiced spectator, require no farther proof, than has been offered me during these past days, to be assured, that on yourself alone it depends, whether or not this alliance takes place. I think very highly of Lord Hervey, as a conscientious and pious man, and I excuse his blind hatred of every thing Catholic. Think what a useful and laudable task will be yours, to enlighten the obscurity, and soften the asperities, of his mind towards that long misunderstood and persecuted class of his countrymen, towards whom you now feel so kindly!"

"Oh, my dear madam!" cried Geraldine, "I did not request the favour of this private conversation, to discuss the good qualities of Lord Hervey, or the possible influence I might have in dis-

engaging him from the trammels of a prejudiced party. I wish him every earthly and spiritual good ; but my chief concern at present, is the peace of my own soul, and I was in hopes, from all I had been told, from all I had seen, of your ladyship, that you would not have refused to aid me !”

“ You are hurt with me, dear Miss Carrington,” said Lady Winefride ; “ but do not blame the caution with which I hear that you are ‘ *almost* a Catholic !’ for between that state of mind, and a fixed determination to enter the Catholic Church, there is a great gulph fixed, which few can pass. Faith is the gift of God ! This, however, I will promise,” continued she, as the distant sound of voices announced the final breaking up of the dinner party, “ this I will promise—to pray constantly for you, trusting that my poor prayers may be heard in your behalf, and I will earnestly commend you to those of our blessed Lady, who cannot plead in vain !”

On returning to the drawing-room, Lord Hervey’s countenance betrayed the alarm and displeasure, at the acquaintance, which, since his arrival, he had narrowly watched, and which seemed to be drawing towards intimacy, between Lady Winefride and Geraldine. Approaching the latter, while yet apart from any group, he said, in a low voice, and very gravely, “ I believe you are aware,

Miss Carrington, of the awful state in which my father's old friend continues, in spite of every means of grace afforded her, in this land of Bibles and of Christian privileges, and I trust you are also on your guard against that crafty spirit of proselytism, which every Romanist is bound to exert. I cannot resist giving you this warning voice, and you must assure me that, in doing so, I offend you not."

"I believe that you are mistaken," replied Geraldine, "respecting the pious and liberal-minded person to whom you allude. I am sure that you do her injustice: but I am also sure that your warning is kindly meant, and therefore I thank you."

"But will you promise to profit by this warning, which I would make tenfold more solemn, were it possible," added Lord Hervey, placing a chair for Geraldine near a table covered with new prints, which seemed to authorize the tête-a-tête.

"No," replied she, "for I repeat, that your warning is given in ignorance of the lady, and of her creed."

"Then, by that very defence," cried he, "I see that the poison has been already imbibed. Listen to me, for God's sake! This new friend of yours is not a mere teller of beads: she is an unusually clever woman, and well skilled in all that can 'make the worse appear the better reason.' I believe my father to have listened by far too

much to her, when a boy, and, therefore, I can the better judge of the danger now threatening one but little versed in controversy."

"I am, perhaps, more versed in it than you suppose," said Geraldine, smiling, "for I have been occupied with little else ever since the beginning of the Oxford vacation, which my uncle spent at Elverton."

"Ah! the Warden, how is he?"

"He is in good health, but I fear that I have thrown him into bad spirits, for he is as much dissatisfied with me as you can be," said Geraldine, determined that, as an opening had thus been given her, she would not leave Lord Hervey in ignorance of her religious opinions.

"I could not have ventured to express dissatisfaction, and, indeed, I wait but to hear from your own lips, that there is no cause of alarm to your best—your Protestant friends.—You are silent," added Lord Hervey, as he turned over a fresh print for her seeming notice; but still Geraldine spoke not. At length he asked abruptly,—

"Pray, Miss Carrington, what views does your friend Miss Graham hold?"

"Oh! the best and soundest in the world," cried Geraldine, looking up with a bright smile of mirth, which Lord Hervey thought beautiful. "Miss Graham's religious opinions are precisely

your own, my Lord, and must therefore entirely satisfy and delight you."

"The opinions of but one woman can satisfy and delight me, and all my anxiety is centered in her," replied Lord Hervey, in a tone of such deep feeling, that Geraldine's heart was touched, and she found it safer to join the group of gay disputants, then surrounding Lady Hungerford, with their ready spokesman, Mr. Everard, demanding her casting vote, whether, as the party had now increased to a sufficient number, they should do honour to her fête by acting charades, or by dancing?

"But my birthday was three days ago," said Lady Hungerford.

"Yes! but you know it fell on a Sunday," exclaimed one of the fair petitioners. "It was the only dull birthday I ever passed in this house. Do let us be merry to-night 'en revanche,' dear Lady Hungerford. Only tell us,—which shall it be, acting or dancing?"

"Why, really," said Lady Hungerford, in genuine perplexity, "I cannot tell which Hervey would endure the best. But I suppose that, as King David danced, and there is no precedent whatever in the Bible for acting, the dancing would be the least objectionable. What say you, Mr. Everard; do you think we might quote David dancing with all his might?"

“ I think,” replied Mr. Everard, “ that, as King David’s dance was in the fervour and exaltation of religious joy, Lord Hervey would scarcely admit the precedent for to-night ; but the feasting and dancing on the return of even a prodigal son, might induce him to forgive our celebrating your ladyship’s birthday, and his own auspicious arrival, and so I vote with you, for the gay dance and the minstrel throng !”

“ We must supply the minstrel part from the fair musicians here,” said Lady Hungerford. “ I never dreamed of celebrating my birthday three days after the time, and must trust to the talent and good humour of my guests, for making merry, —only, no waltzing !”

As Lady Hungerford said this, Mrs. Torrington, who was an intimate friend at the Priory, and a fine musician, touched on the piano the first notes of Herz’s brilliant quadrilles, and Geraldine, to whom the music was familiar, and who had determined, during the previous debate, neither to dance, nor yet to be a kill-joy, drew forth a rich accompaniment on the harp, which roused the whist party to a perception of the reason why they were driven into a corner,—and very soon all was arranged for the dance. Geraldine looked round for Katherine Graham, and perceived her, with a scared look, retreating from the importunities of the young German, and edging close to the card

table, as the quietest, and, therefore, the most endurable, of the two evils. Another glance round the room ascertained that Lord Hervey also had withdrawn into a small room, forming a sort of recess to the large one in which the party danced, and there he paced slowly to and fro, till at length, by a side door, he escaped to the privacy of his own apartments, and Geraldine found, to her great dismay, that, from that moment, she had lost all interest in the joyous scene, that all seemed noise and frivolity, and that it was a relief when the party at length broke up, and she was left to ponder over the fresh difficulties which Lord Hervey's continued interest in her, seemed likely to present in her path to the Catholic Church. Having dismissed her attendant, and taking leave for the night of Katherine Graham, Geraldine sat by the remains of her fire for some time, in despondency, till, suddenly rousing herself,—“This must not be!” she mentally exclaimed. “I am in no way compromised; and free I will remain, notwithstanding the advice of friends, and the treacherous whispers of my own heart!” A feeling of impatience crossed her at that moment, at the sense of honour, carried even to scrupulosity, which prevented Lady Winefride, while a guest at Sedgemoor Priory, from entering on those minor points of Catholic belief, to which Geraldine still objected. “To-morrow being Friday,” thought



she, “ Lady Winefride will, I know, return home at an early hour, to attend her religious duties at the chapel in Burnleigh.—Oh ! that I could escape, were it only for one day, from the unlooked for danger besetting me here !”

## CHAPTER III.

Ye good distressed, ye noble few, who here unbending stand  
Beneath life's pressure, yet bear up awhile.

*Thomson.*

ON descending, the following morning, to the breakfast room, Geraldine found Lord Hungerford, with a handful of pamphlets and hand-bills, standing with his back to the fire, and listening alternately to Lord Hervey and Colonel Torrington, with that countenance of benevolent, yet humorous, expression, which was his characteristic when the speakers had, in his opinion, gone beyond their depth in argument. Lord Hervey, supported by Colonel Torrington, was earnestly enforcing something, which his father was unwilling to grant. At length, Lord Hungerford, breaking from his two companions, threw the papers on the table with a laugh, saying,—“ Well, then, let us come to a compromise. I will take the chair, provided that, in addition to all I am to say and to read for you and your party, I address the audience in an independent speech, and read a few facts that have come under my own observation.”

“Willingly, my dear father,” returned Lord Hervey, “on one condition——”

“Condition !” cried the old lord, in mock dignity ; “I’ll none of your trammels !”

“What is all this ?” said his lady, who, with the rest of the party, had now joined the disputants.

“Oh, the same story over and over again,” replied Lord Hungerford. “Humbug and cant have met together, palaver and twaddle have kissed each other !” Is not that as good a paraphrase as you have heard at Geneva, Hervey ?”

Colonel Torrington laughed, but Lord Hervey, suppressing the indignant reply which rose to his lips, drew one of the hand-bills from the packet on the table, and read aloud,—that “A meeting for promoting the glorious cause of the Reformation, was proposed to be held in the Town Hall of Elverton, in the county of Stafford, on the 22nd of December, 183—, when all who valued Bible truth, were invited to support, by their presence, so important an object, at this awful crisis in the advance of Popery, and reign of Satan upon earth !”

“I do not see how matters, that are still in advance, can well be come to a crisis,” observed Mr. Everard.

“Therefore, at any rate,” added Lord Hungerford, “we may eat our breakfast in peace, after which, Hervey, I will give you an outline of the

speech I should make, and the documents I should read, provided you insisted on my being chairman at this absurd meeting."

"And my conditions, my lord, were simply to hear previously the speech and the documents," said Lord Hervey, "which you now spontaneously offer."

"But what an extraordinary time of the year to select for a county meeting!" observed Miss Scotney.

"Why so?" replied Lord Hervey to the fair objector. "The depth of winter is generally the time chosen for the pleasures of a ball, in thin dresses, and at midnight. This meeting, on the contrary, will take place at mid-day, in clothing suited to the rigour of the season."

"I believe," said Colonel Torrington, "that our friend, the Major, who is the main spring of all these things, wishes to establish these meetings as much at and about Christmas as can be arranged, in order to find all the county families at their post."

"Well, now, do tell me," said Lady Hungerford, "what is the good of all these meetings? I know that Hervey thinks highly of them, and that Major Tankerville journeys about the country to promote them; but really it seems to me very illnatured and unfriendly towards our Catholic neighbours, to be encouraging what must give

them pain. It is very much against what *I* think Christianity, to be raking up old stories against people; and, in point of policy, it is enough to drive them into retaliation, and to mar all that proper toleration of each other's creeds, which has of late years been such a blessing in Staffordshire."

"Bravo, my Lady!" cried Lord Hungerford, "you have so nearly given my intended speech, that I need not rehearse, and will merely, with the permission of the company present, read a few documents, as a specimen of what the Reformation meeting may expect from me, as their chairman."

Lord Hervey, who read mischief in his father's eye, suggested that perhaps another time might be more convenient; but Mr. Everard, who likewise suspected the bent of Lord Hungerford's humour, which ran precisely according to his own view of the subject, encouraged his old friend to produce whatever might throw light on the contest, and the latter, drawing forth a roll of papers from the breast of his coat, and putting on his spectacles, prefaced his reading by turning to Mr. Everard, and asking him whether he remembered, at the time of Catholic emancipation, how necessary it had been to instruct the head, as well as to warm the heart, in order to serve the cause of humanity and justice?—"Now you, Everard, were a learned friend to the Catholics; but I—God help me!—

knew little about their history, from the time of Guy Fawkes to the last relief bill, till I searched into acts of Parliament, and became possessed of these very extracts which I am willing to give forth to this county meeting, if required. Great was the alarm, some years back, with my Tory friends, that, if emancipation were granted, the land would be once more over-run with popery, an event I should have deprecated as much as they : but I laughed at this fear, from the conviction that popery and John Bull could never shake hands again. You remember old De Grey, father to the present baronet ?”

“ Remember him !” replied Mr. Everard, with one of his bursts of feeling ; “ remember him ! indeed I do, and the best proof which his surviving friends can give that they remember the calm sense, the mild dignity, of the father, is by loving and serving his son.”

“ And pray do *you* think it necessary to give the same proof of remembering old Sir Hugh De Grey ?” audibly whispered Lord Hungerford to Geraldine, without, however, a thought beyond the passing joke.

Geraldine returned some answer in the same tone of mirth, but, at the same time, being conscious that this unexpected question had drawn on her the smiling observation of the whole party.

coloured deeply, and Lord Hervey's brow contracted into a frown.

"Well," continued the Earl, "I once appealed to De Grey, whether the apprehensions were not absurd, of the Catholic faith being more than tolerated in England? and the reply was—'No! my lord. When you are better acquainted with the tyranny which drove Englishmen into Protestantism, you will admit that your Tory friends have just grounds for apprehending that, when that tyranny is removed, the old faith will revive throughout the land.'

"'Depend upon it, my good sir,' said I, 'that the Catholic religion is contrary to the genius of the country. Our Englishman is too great a lover of simplicity, and of plain straight-forward sense, ever to prefer popery when he has once had a taste of something better, that is—better to *his* mind. A proof of how well Protestantism and John Bull suit each other, was given, in the cordial reception of the Reformation by the bulk of the nation, however painful the change might have been to the comparatively few.'

"'Certainly that would be a proof,' replied De Grey; 'but I deny the fact.'

"'What!' cried I, 'deny that John Bull has ever done anything but follow his own will, either in religion or politics?'

“ ‘ Yes !’ said he, ‘ I deny the fact, that the people of England cordially and disinterestedly changed from the religion of their forefathers ; and I will give you my counter proofs, my lord, not in Catholic histories and biography, which you would doubtless consider to be as partial as we find the works of Protestants, but I refer you to Protestant acts of parliament : and, remark this, my lord, had the Reformation been the wish of the people, no acts of parliament would have been required to compel its reception.’ Sir Hugh then referred to his pocket book for a few dates, on which he gave me this historical sketch, which I have since verified by my own researches :— ‘ In the year 1548, King Edward the Sixth, as supreme Head of the Church, had it ordained and enacted, that any clergyman not using the book of Common Prayer, and other rites, according to the Church of England, or using any other form of prayer, should suffer imprisonment for life ! Here, then,’ said De Grey, ‘ we have the flock at once left without a pastor, or seduced, by his timorous example, into temporising with their consciences. In 1551, this act was extended to the laity, ordering that, ‘ if *any* person be present at any form of prayer, or ecclesiastical rites, other than those set forth in the book of Common Prayer, he shall suffer imprisonment for life.’ Soon after, it was enacted, that, for doubting the queen’s ecclesias-



tical supremacy, (a point questioned by some Protestant divines, and denounced by Hume) her subjects were to suffer the pains of death, and forfeiture of their estates, as in cases of high treason : That to be reconciled to the Church of Rome, or withdrawn from that of England, was also punishable as for high treason : That if, at the age of sixteen years, any person went not to the Church of England Service, he should pay a penalty of twenty pounds per month, and, if unable to pay this penalty, he should be imprisoned until he conformed. Just conceive this demand on the peasantry of a country ! If unfortunately you had an estate, two-thirds of it were vested in the crown, until you became a Protestant ; and if you could neither pay the penalty, nor conform against your conscience, you were forced solemnly to abjure your country, and transport yourself beyond seas for ever, giving your personal property, chattels, &c. to the crown,—the penalty on your return being the death of a felon, without benefit of clergy ! Under another act, if you did not conform, you dared not move more than five miles in any direction from your own house, and neither christenings, marriages, nor burials, could take place in your family, but as according to the rites of the Church established by law. Now, what say you, Lord Hungerford, to this free choice of John Bull, in the change of his religion !—this

‘cordial reception of the Reformation by the bulk of the people?’

“ ‘Why, that you are referring,’ said I, ‘during some limited and peculiarly severe period, in the history of the rival Churches, to measures, which I should be the last man to defend, and which, thank God, could not, from their very barbarity, last beyond a given time.’

“De Grey smiled, and, drawing a parcel of papers from his escritoire, put them into my hands, saying, ‘Here is an abstract of acts of Parliament, made by the Whig member, Mr. C——, before this last session, and sent to me a few days ago. I have made a copy, and resign the documents to you.’

“Now,” said the Earl, readjusting his spectacles, and getting the light comfortably over his left shoulder, “here are the very documents, which Mr. C——, having embodied them in the best speech which he made that year, in the lower House, allowed me to retain, and which I will now read without comment.”

*‘Abstract of Aets of Parliament, which subjected Catholics to penalties and punishments for exercising their religious worship, &c.’*

ACT PASSED IN 1568.

‘Any person reconciling another to the Church

of Rome, shall have judgment, suffer, and forfeit, as in cases of high treason. All Jesuits, seminary and other priests remaining in England, or entering the kingdom after forty days, shall for this offence be adjudged a traitor, and shall suffer, lose, and forfeit, as in cases of high treason. Receiving or relieving any such person shall be a felony; and sending money or relief to such persons, shall be punished with transportation and forfeiture of property. Any one knowing where a Jesuit is in the kingdom, and not discovering it, shall forfeit two hundred marks.

STATUTE PASSED IN 1581.

‘ Any person saying, or wilfully hearing, Mass, shall forfeit two hundred marks (that is, one hundred and thirty-three pounds, six shillings, and eightpence), and suffer twelve months imprisonment; and it shall be treason to be reconciled, or withdrawn to the Romish religion; and all aiders shall suffer as for misprision of treason.

STATUTE LIKEWISE IN 1581.

‘ Any person above the age of sixteen not going to church, or usual place of common prayer, shall forfeit twenty pounds per month; and should he absent himself still, he shall give sufficient sureties for two hundred pounds for his good behaviour, and shall so continue bound until he conform him-

self and come to church. And any schoolmaster, who shall not repair to the Established Church, shall forfeit ten pounds per month.

Every person forfeiting money under this act, and not able to pay the same, shall be committed to prison, there to remain until he pay the penalties, or conform himself, or go to the church, and there do as is aforesaid.

## STATUTE IN 1587.

‘ Any person not getting his child baptized by a lawful minister, shall forfeit one hundred pounds.

‘ The sheriff or other officer may break open any house wherein popish recusants may be.

## STATUTE IN 1605.

‘ Any person discovering where Mass was said, shall have his own pardon, and one-third of the goods, &c. forfeited by the attainder.

## STATUTE IN 1627.

‘ No child to be sent beyond seas without license.

‘ Any person sending a child to a papish seminary beyond seas for instruction, shall forfeit one hundred pounds—and such child shall be afterwards incapable of inheriting his estate, or making any purchase.

‘ No person to keep a school out of the universi-

ties or colleges, unless in the family of a nobleman of the Established Church, under penalty of forty shillings per day.

‘ Any person going himself, or sending any others, beyond the seas, to be bred or instructed in popery, shall be disabled to sue or use any action at law or equity, to be executor, or administrator, or capable of any deed or legacy, or to bear any office, and shall lose and forfeit all his lands, tenements, and hereditaments, rents, annuities, offices, and estates of freehold, for and during his natural life.

#### STATUTE IN 1670.

‘ Any person permitting meetings in his house, offices, &c., for the exercise of religion, shall forfeit twenty pounds.

‘ Justices of the peace, constables, &c., are empowered to break open doors, &c., where they are informed such meetings may be held.

#### STATUTE IN 1700.

‘ A reward of one hundred pounds for taking and prosecuting a popish bishop or priest for saying Mass, or exercising any of his functions.

‘ A popish bishop or priest saying Mass, or keeping a school, shall be adjudged to perpetual imprisonment.

## STATUTE IN 1714.

‘Children sent beyond seas shall forfeit their estates, and if, on their return, they do not conform, their next of kin, being Protestant, shall inherit their estate.

‘*Note.*—So rigidly were all these laws executed, that Lord Scroop was, in 1626, accused to the king for conniving at recusancy, inasmuch as he had only convicted one thousand six hundred and seventy Catholics, in the East Riding of Yorkshire !’

“There !” cried Lord Hungerford, flinging down the documents with violence on the table ; “as I said five years ago, on ~~the~~ first reading these atrocities, so say I now. Free choicc was *not* the portion of England ; and furthermore, I will boldly tell my guests, that there sits not one amongst us, whose ancestor may not have been starved or bribed into his Protestantism. Therefore talk not to me,” cried the old nobleman, who was now worked up to a state of indignation, which no one attempted to soften, or controul ; “talk not to me, I say, of these unchristian meetings for rousing anew the evil passions of brother against brother—where one ignorant weak fanatic succeeds another, and silly women give their tears, their

smiles, and their gold, for the truly feminine excitement of making mischief!"

This last sentence on the fair portion of the company broke up the lingering breakfast table—some laughing and defending the speakers and listeners so unsparingly condemned—others deeply pondering as they retired on what they had heard. Amongst the latter was Colonel Torrington, who, taking Lord Hervey's arm, drew him into an adjoining room, where they paced thoughtfully to and fro.

"Of course, it will be out of the question to press your father to preside at this meeting," said the Colonel.

"Yes!" replied Lord Hervey; "I was not aware how strong and deep his feelings lay. He would certainly be a most unfit chairman, and mar the whole proceeding. We have a great escape, in his not having indulged his vein of practical humour, by consenting to our proposal, and concealing his projects, till it would have been too late to frustrate them."

"Do you still intend to patronize this meeting?" said Colonel Torrington, with some hesitation.

"Still intend it!" cried Lord Hervey. "Why, Torrington, we must exert ourselves more than ever against the weight which my father's quixotic support will throw into the opposite scale. It is

wonderful what fascination Satan casts round that apostate Church, sometimes by the dazzling pomp and dignity of power, sometimes by the more subtle attraction of persecuted adversity. The public acts passed against popery seem to have been certainly severe even to cruelty; but we are aiming at nothing of that sort. Our warfare is directed neither against the lives nor property of these unhappy victims of a false religion. Ours is the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God!"

"But has it never occurred to you, Hervey, that persons are permitted, nay, even invited, to speak at these meetings, who make disgraceful mistakes in history, and, as far as I may venture to judge, in theology also? It appears to me exceedingly desirable, in our present conflict of opinion with Catholics, that we should not urge on them objections which cannot be proved, or take for granted that every departure from their faith is necessarily an approach to truth. I wish to heaven that none but well informed persons were permitted to speak; and, by the bye, it would not be amiss if Tankerville were a little more accurate in his statements, and simple in his phraseology."

"And Colonel Torrington a little less fastidious, and more filled with zeal for the spread of gospel truth, so as not to make a man an offender for a



word," replied Lord Hervey. "But come, my dear friend, prepare your own enlightened address now, while I write to Sir Thomas Belfast, who promised me to take the chair in case of my father's refusal."

## CHAPTER IV.

That is the heart for thoughtful seer,  
Watching in trance, nor dark nor clear,  
The "uncertain" future as it nearer draws;  
His spirit calm'd, the storm to meet,  
Feeling the rock beneath his feet,  
And tracing thro' the cloud th' eternal cause.

*Keeble.*

IN the meantime, Geraldine had retired to her room, her whole mind engrossed by what had passed in the breakfast room. Did Lord Hervey really intend to speak at this meeting, and, after all the sufferings he had just heard detailed, to open anew a crusade against the Catholics, in spite of his parents' liberal and friendly feeling towards them? Who were to appear on the Catholic side of the question? and would they be allowed an uninterrupted hearing? On these points she had no means of gaining information, unless through Mr. Everard, and she had seen him start on horse-back for Burnleigh, immediately on leaving the breakfast table. She thought, with regret, of that weakness of the chest which prevented this learned and candid old gentleman from speaking in public,

and determined to prevail on him to find, if possible, some other enlightened Protestant, to stem the torrent of misrepresentation and invective which would be poured forth from the platform of the meeting in the town-hall of Elverton. She felt thankful that the invitation to be chairman of the meeting had roused Lord Hungerford to speak of, and read openly, all those facts which had so deeply interested her, and which she must have foregone, had she yielded to the wish of accompanying her Catholic friend to the service at Burnleigh.

Lady Winefride had arrived, at the usual time for the Mass on the week days; and, at that very hour when the persecutions of "her people" were being related at the Priory, she was kneeling before the sanctuary at Burnleigh chapel, favoured by a participation in the most blessed mystery of the altar: and, after such communion with her God as a Catholic alone can know, the aged Christian was returning full of calm devotion to the Priory, when, in driving through the village of Sedgemoor, she saw, on a large placard, the same announcement which had occupied the thoughts of so many during that day. Lady Winefride gave a mournful smile, as she traced the same watch-words which had ruined the fortunes, corrupted the integrity, or broken the hearts, of those whose histories had been imprinted in her early memory.

“Alarming increase of Popery”—“Principles of the glorious Reformation”—stood forth conspicuously in capitals, amid the smaller print, and furnished, not only thoughts of the past, but meditations for the future, till she joined our heroine in the drawing room of the Priory. The rest of the party had retired, to dress for dinner ; but Geraldine, who was on the point of following their example, could not resist the unexpected boon of a short *tête-à-tête* with the almost inaccessible Lady Winefride, and, joyfully greeting her, entreated her ladyship to grant her ten minutes’ uninterrupted hearing.

“Do you wish me to subscribe to your Reformation Society ?” said Lady Winefride smiling ; “because it will not take me ten minutes to say—‘No.’”

“What a setting at nought of all my confessions and confidences !” said Geraldine, also smiling, but vexed. “Why is it that you continue to elude my serious application to you, that you discourage my advance in the pursuit of what you, Lady Winefride, must think the only truth ?—that you refuse to dispel the few remaining doubts which prevent my cordial reception of that vast, that wondrous scheme of God’s dealings with man, received by Catholics ?”

“These are heavy charges,” replied Lady Wine-

fride, still smiling benevolently on the eager countenance of her reprover.

"But indeed they are true," continued Geraldine. "I was reconciled to leaving my home, and, with it, the hope of a confidential communication with the pious and judicious priest of Elverton, simply because I concluded that your ladyship would be here. My heart leaped for joy, when I found my hopes realized, and perceived, by your kind greeting, that I was an object of some interest to you."

"And that indeed you are," interrupted Lady Winefride.

"But not in what regards my real welfare," continued Geraldine; "and I own that I am greatly disappointed and cast down."

"You are unused to disappointment or humiliation of any kind, I should conclude," said Lady Winefride; "and if so, this incomprehensible and provoking conduct of mine, in compelling you to abide by the judgment of another, will perhaps be a more profitable exercise in Christian attainment than the solving of some controversial difficulties."

"Then you are determined not to assist me, Lady Winefride?" said Geraldine, proudly yet mournfully. "Well! God can work without human means, and I will trust no longer to them; I can still read, and think, and pray."

“I have made no determination not to assist you,” replied Lady Winefride; “but the time has not yet arrived for me to give you more than this passing advice, which is *not* to read, and *not* to think, on those deep subjects, which have taken such possession of your mind during the past six months. Having done all that the head can do, now let the heart work;—resign it entirely into the hands of Him, who has already given you such proofs of his electing love;—pray that he will crown his rich gifts to you, by giving you that child-like simplicity and humility, without which no one can become a Catholic !”

At this instant, Lord Hervey entered the room, and, notwithstanding the polite greeting which took place between him and Lady Winefride, his countenance betrayed the displeasure with which he again found her ladyship in private communication with Geraldine. The latter immediately withdrew to her toilette, partly touched, and partly mortified, by the result of this last appeal to her Catholic friend, yet resolved, for a time, to follow her advice, and to cease from controversy. This, however, proved impossible.

In the evening, Mr. Everard drew Geraldine aside, and told her that he had met several of the Catholic gentry that morning at Burnleigh, and that he believed none of them intended to be present, still less to speak, at the approaching Reform-

ation meeting. "Some of them," added he, "laugh at these impotent attempts to keep the Protestant world in leading strings any longer, and consider that silence, on the part of the aspersed, is the most dignified proof of contempt, while those who do consider some condescension necessary from Catholics towards their ignorant countrymen, are deterred from appearing, by the notion that a fair hearing will not be granted them."

"I am sorry to hear this," replied Geraldine, "for there will be great triumph amongst the Protestant party, should the Catholics refuse to meet them. Such refusals are always given out to proceed from a latent sense of error, and a dread of open and manly discussion before the people."

At this instant, Lord Hervey joined them, saying, with an air of triumph, "So you see, Mr. Everard, these cunning papists are afraid to meet us! Refusals have been sent from all the principal Romanists of the county, both priests and laymen. Error always skulks in the dark. And is not this enough in itself to decide between the parties? *We* are bold in the Lord, Miss Carrington!"

Geraldine felt that she could not reply with calmness, she was therefore silent; but Mr. Everard said, "Rest assured, my Lord, that whenever the lawfully appointed heads and pastors of the

Establishment invite a conference with the vicars-apostolic and bishops of the Catholic Church in England and Ireland, the challenge will meet with very different treatment."

"But we see otherwise," replied Lord Hervey; "for, when the invitation, with every possible concession on their part, was sent by the committee from Exeter Hall to Dr. Murray, it was declined!"

"Of course it was!" said Mr. Everard. "Who are the committee of Exeter Hall, that a Catholic bishop should leave the important duties of a distant see, to meet a party, who, though nominally in the Church of England, advance opinions which undermine their own Church equally with his—a party unauthorized by their own spiritual rulers? Let, however, the archbishops and bishops of the English Protestant Church assemble in Exeter Hall, or where you will, with a duly appointed chairman, and you will find no reluctance on the part of the Catholic dignitaries to meet them in conference, while the Catholic laity will throng the meeting. But pray, Lord Hervey, are you aware of the circumstances attending the last bear-garden held at Elverton, called a Reformation meeting, at which several of the neighbouring Catholics were present, both of the priesthood and laity?"

"I heard there was some clamour," replied his



Lordship; “but I was abroad at the time, and know no particulars.”

“Then I will give you some,” said the old gentleman, raising his voice to gain a larger audience, in which he succeeded to his full wishes, Lady Winefride alone remaining in the adjoining drawing-room. “The facts were these:—At the first Reformation Meeting in the town of Elverton, several of the hearers were Catholics, and the priest of that place joining the party on the platform, had prepared to speak towards the close of the meeting. Before, however, he could advance in his turn, so many misstatements and invectives had been uttered, and the ignorant crowd below had been so much excited by inflammatory eloquence, that, when Mr. Bernard’s name was announced as the ‘Roman Catholic Priest,’ a general groan was heard—his speech was interrupted by comments—he was not allowed to know his own creed, still less to explain it—he was accused of compromising and palliating in favour of the monster Popery, though he quoted from the catechisms—and tumult and uproar continued, till, coughed, and groaned, and hissed to silence, Mr. Bernard left the meeting! With this experience of the candour and politeness to be expected from a wilfully prejudiced party, the Catholic priests declined attending the next anniversary meeting, whereupon these Re-

formation gentry boasted, as they do now, that they had invited the Popish priests to attend the meeting, but that, dreading to encounter a fair discussion before the public, they preferred carrying on their proselyting system in secret, which the Elverton priest, in particular, was doing to an alarming extent in the town. Now, with respect to this proselytism, here was again a perversion of the truth, which was this. Mr. Bernard, on receiving the summons last year to attend another meeting, wrote word to the secretary and committee of the Reformation Society, that he felt it to be more profitable to the humble seeker after truth, and more in keeping with his holy office, to avoid all wrangling and contentious meetings; and, instead of again appearing on the platform of their assembly, he intended to preach at that time a series of controversial sermons in his chapel, when those who had attended the Reformation meeting, and wished in candour to hear both sides of a question, were invited to listen to a simple exposition of the doctrines held by Catholics. Well! I believe many of the present company have heard what follows—that the little chapel was so beset, that, although the windows were taken out on the meadow side, yet the crowd extended far beyond the reach of Mr. Bernard's voice; and that, disappointed in hearing his public explanation, many went to him for private instruction. They have

heard of the conversions which followed—of the consternation of the Reformation party—of the fulminations from the Evangelical and Dissenting pulpits—of the rising of the mob—of the driving the priest from the town, with the arrival of the cholera, and the remorse and terror which recalled Mr. Bernard—and have quieted all persecution, till, now, this Christmas meeting gives the signal for fresh outrage !”

“ Dear me,” cried the languid bride, Lady Anne Scotney, to her husband, “ how very amusing ! and how very fortunate,” added she in a whisper, “ that all this should happen just at this time, when I expected to be so dull !”

“ I declare,” exclaimed Mrs. Torrington, “ that I should like, above all things, to make a party, and go to this meeting. I have never seen an English Catholic priest in all my life, and we should have so much to talk over afterwards, which makes a Christmas party pass off so well !”

“ Certainly, Mrs. Torrington,” said Sir John Scotney, “ you have every claim to be there, for that hapless husband of yours has been entrapped to make a speech against the very ogre you wish so much to see, but who perchance may eat you both up !”

“ Oh, Henry ! are you really going to make a speech ?” cried Mrs. Torrington, laughing ; “ then I *must* go. Dear Lady Hungerford, do you ever

encounter the noise and mixed company of these places—and will you form a party, and include me? I believe people are required to have an order, or tickets, or something; but here is Lord Hervey, who is all powerful. Are you to be chairman, my Lord?”

“No,” replied his Lordship smiling; “but I can give as many little pink and green talismans, as will ensure your having good seats, where you may see and hear every thing that goes forward.”

Lord Hervey now rang the bell, and dispatched a servant to his rooms for a packet of cards, which, after presenting one to Mrs. Torrington, he placed in his mother’s hands, saying, “Of course, you will keep the reserved tickets for your own party; but the green cards will also secure very good seats for any of the household, who may value the good cause sufficiently to go to this meeting.”

Lord Hervey scarcely listened to Lady Hungerford’s reply about the sixteen miles, and the short days, his eye resting at that moment on another packet of admittance tickets, tied by a harp string, and lying by some embroidery, which he well knew belonged to Geraldine. “Miss Carrington,” continued he, “will perhaps include in *her* party some of our guests?”

Geraldine looked up from the chess board, where Miss Graham and Colonel Torrington were endeavouring to play with attention, and

drawing from the packet two of the tickets, presented the rest to Lord Hervey, saying, "Miss Graham wishes to take one, the other is for my own maid; the remainder of the tickets are entirely at the service of the party present."

"But," said Lord Hervey, "are you not aware that each individual must have a ticket, and that, if you retain two only, you will yourself be left unprovided?"

Geraldine smiled at this pretended misunderstanding, and merely replied, "Two are all I shall require."

"But, my dear," said Lady Hungerford, "do you not mean to be one of the party? I thought you seemed so much interested this morning, when the meeting was announced—and all these doctrinal points are so much more suited to you than to me. I do not like these things, in general, as I said at breakfast, because hitherto they have produced ill-will amongst Christians—and also, I feel something due to my friend Lady Winefride, while she is my guest: but my dear Hervey tells me, that every thing will this time be conducted in the mildest way possible; that any respectable Catholic will be allowed to speak, who sends his name and address to the committee, and that none of that vulgar clamour will be permitted which Mr. Everard has just described. Perhaps, my love, you will oblige me by going, as the rest do, and not appear-

ing singular. I assure you that, but for Lady Winefride, and the chill of returning in the evening air, after my illness, I should be much tempted to go myself, for I have never yet heard my son speak in public."

"I can scarcely hope that Miss Carrington would find, in my feeble efforts, any inducement to listen to a cause she has so little at heart," said Lord Hervey, in a low tone to Geraldine.

"My lord," replied she, "I do but agree with your father, in disliking these meetings, and no graces of oratory, no flights of eloquence, could reconcile me to them."

Lord Hervey was about to reply, when Colonel Torrington, having been check-mated by Katherine, drew him aside, to show him a note from Major Tankerville; and Geraldine made her escape to the piano, where she sang alternately with Mrs. Torrington and Miss Scotney, till the hour of retiring.

"My dear Geraldine," said Katherine, when their attendants had retired for the night, "I think you seem scarcely aware of how much your sentiments are known in favour of the Romish Church. Every thing has been reported to Lady Hungerford, by whom I know not; first, of your disgust at the vacillation and disputes in the evangelical body, next of your conferences with your high Church uncle, the Warden, then of your determin-

ation to read and judge for yourself,—and, lastly, would you believe it,—of our private excursion that evening to the Vesper service in the little chapel at Elverton. All is matter for perpetual, though whispered, comment and conjecture with the guests here, and of long and serious discussions between Lord Hervey and his mother.”

“When did you become aware of this?” said Geraldine.

“Not till this morning,” replied Miss Graham; “when, on leaving the breakfast table, Lady Hungerford invited me to her morning room, to my great surprise, for I know myself incapable of being a favourite. However, I suspected the truth, from the anxious looks she gave you during the reading of those statutes against the Catholics; the more so, as she told me, because you blushed so deeply, when Lord Hungerford attacked you about young De Grey.”

“I believe I was the object of Lord Hungerford’s joke, merely because I sate the nearest to him,” said Geraldine; “and I coloured only because—because Lord Hervey was watching me.”

“How did you know that?”

“I *felt* it!” said Geraldine, turning away.

“I am happy to hear of that intuitive sympathy,” returned Katherine, laughing; “but, my dear, if you blush, merely because Lord Hervey watches you, your cheeks might be of a perpetual damask.”

“I wish,” said Geraldine, after musing for some minutes, “that I might publish that engagement between Sir Eustace de Grey and his cousin. I cannot think why Lady Winefride imparted the secret to me, and to no one else!”

“If I did not think that old lady very deep,” returned Katherine, “I might give her credit for honourable motives in this: as it is, I think she invented this engagement to put you off your guard in your acquaintance with her nephew.”

“Charity thinketh no evil,” said Geraldine; “and, if I were to tell you the rebuffs I have received from Lady Winefride, whenever I have sought to engage her in controversy, the advice she has constantly given me to pray, and not to argue; and the generous tribute she renders to Lord Hervey’s piety and zeal, you would own how much you are warped by religious—or rather anti-religious prejudice. Once only have I pronounced the name of her nephew, and a shade immediately passed over her countenance:—she never mentions him.”

“Neither let us mention him,” said Katherine impatiently; “I wish to forget his very existence, if possible. And now, Geraldine, to the subject of this approaching meeting. It is so much the wish of Lady Hungerford that you should go, as the rest of the party here intend to do, and it will appear so open an avowal of Catholicism if you do not,



that I do wish you would sacrifice your own will for once, to oblige others !”

“ For *once* !” repeated Geraldine. “ Why, Katherine, your estimation of your friend is at a low ebb indeed. But I feel for you, my poor Kate, and can quite understand your irritation at my present conduct and position. Let us now say ‘ Good night,’ and, when we meet to-morrow, I will give you my decision, which very possibly may be consent.”

## CHAPTER V.

A thousand probabilities cannot make one truth.

*Italian Proverb.*

AT length the day arrived for the now annual meeting of the Branch Reformation Society, in the town of Elverton, and the arrival and entertainment of the speakers from London—that centre of unity !! The previous tea parties, and expositions of the Prophet Daniel and the Apocalypse, together with some fresh horrors from Ireland, and a bazaar to be held in aid of the impoverished funds, all united to raise expectation and excitement to fever height, especially amongst the ladies of the town and its neighbourhood. A goodly train of equipages started from Sedgemoor Priory, amongst which appeared the Carrington arms, giving, with the reluctant presence of Geraldine, apparent sanction and approval to the Reformation cause from the principal family of the place. This barouche contained, besides its owner and Miss Graham, the ever animated Mr. Everard; but just as they were driving from the hall door, Lord Hervey called to the servants to stop, and leaning

on the door of the carriage,—“ I beg your pardon,” said he, “ for detaining you, Miss Carrington, but there has been some great mistake ! How comes Mr. Everard here ? I reckoned on a seat in his britschka, and find it full of women-servants.”

“ Why, where is your own carriage ?” said Mr. Everard, full of glee.

“ Full likewise, within and without. I gave it up to the steward’s room ; and they have started this hour, to secure seats. I made sure of a tête-à-tête with you.”

“ Then, my lord, you know but little of my gallantry !” replied the old gentleman.

“ Lady Hungerford wishes to know, my lord, whether anything is the matter,” said a servant, advancing hastily to the carriage. During this parley, Miss Graham had removed the shawls and furs which had filled the corner opposite to her, and Mr. Everard, taking the hint, had edged himself into it, leaving vacant the seat next the now opened door, and fronting that in which sate the grave and silent Geraldine.

“ Do you not think there will be snow, Mr. Everard ?” said Katherine, with a woman’s adroitness, looking, and engaging her opposite companion to look, away from Lord Hervey and Geraldine, through the window next her.

“ You are resolved, then, not to invite my entrance,” said Lord Hervey, in a low murmur, to

the fair owner of the equipage, "and not for worlds would I intrude on you. How long would it take," said he aloud, "to get horses from Sedgemoor?"

"They don't keep horses, my lord, at Sedgemoor, but at Burnleigh: it would be a good three quarters of an hour."

"Mr. Everard," said Lord Hervey, "you will have the start of me, and all I ask of your generosity is, to beg of Tankerville to make use of these papers, if he require them; and to stand up manfully till I join him."

"My lord," said Geraldine, at length vanquished, "I wish neither to be discourteous, nor to indulge in any party spirit. It is expected that you should open the meeting, and I hope that you will do so by accompanying us."

At these words Lord Hervey sprang into the carriage, which rapidly followed the other equipages, and silence for a time was unbroken, after the tardy reply of Mr. Everard to Miss Graham, accompanied by one of his arch looks:—"No! after all, I do not think there will be snow!"

Like most of those, whose minds are engaged on great and lofty topics, Geraldine was easy even to carelessness in the ordinary affairs of life; and the benevolence and sweetness of her temper, which led her to prefer the comfort and pleasure of others to her own, made her '*facile à vivre*' even to a....characteristic,—we cannot bring our-

selves to call it a fault. This pliancy, however, of disposition, in things of inferior moment, has its inconveniences, and had placed Geraldine that morning in what modern politicians term a ‘false position:’ but those who had teased and fondled her into it, had gained nothing on her convictions, and she continued to lean back in deep thought, connected with her future avowal of the Catholic faith; while Lord Hervey, seemingly intent on the notes for his intended speech, to which he continued his pencil corrections, awaited the moment in which he might address some prefatory discourse to Geraldine, calculated to dispose her to listen with more pleasure and approbation to the speakers of that day, than he feared she was inclined to do. The silence was first broken by Mr. Everard’s remarking, that the coachman had, in the Irish phrase, taken his ‘morning,’ or, that the horses were restive, to which Miss Graham replied, that, from the unequal motion of the carriage, she rather thought that one of the springs was giving way. It soon became apparent, even to the two who were the most abstracted, that something was the matter, and Lord Hervey, grasping Geraldine’s hand, intreated her not to be alarmed.

“ I scarcely ever am,” was her calm reply: but she vainly endeavoured to withdraw her hand,

which was only the more firmly detained, as it became still more evident that something threatened their overturn. One of the servants from the seat behind had succeeded in alighting, and, as the horses had now stopped, to rear and kick, he opened the door, and letting down the steps, intreated his young mistress to descend, half lifting her from the carriage; Lord Hervey sprang after her, and scarcely had he done so, when the horses plunged forward, and soon bore the vehicle nearly out of sight, till, at the foot of a steep hill, the rearing and kicking recommenced.

“What is the cause of all this?” said Lord Hervey to the servant.

“One of the wheelers is new to the rest, my lord, and is restive with them. He has always been a leader, and wants to get on, so he bites the horse before him.”

Geraldine and Lord Hervey both smiled, as some moral comparisons crossed their minds, and the former's anxiety respecting the fate of her two friends, ceased, as she perceived that the other groom had succeeded in freeing the restive horse, and was now holding him by the rein. “They seem to have now got the horses quiet,” said she; “but why was any change made in the old set?”

“The coachman only found out this morning, ma'am, that the near wheeler had lost a shoe, and

my lord's groom lent him a horse. The coachman has got them quiet now, I think, ma'am, and will change him with a leader, and all will go smooth."

"Go on," said Lord Hervey, "to give your assistance; and tell Miss Graham and Mr. Everard, not to return for us, for that we shall soon join them."

The man obeyed, and Lord Hervey, with Geraldine on his arm, followed, more slowly than was absolutely necessary, which the latter perceiving, said,—“I fear, my lord, that you will be late at the Town Hall.”

“Oh no !” replied he ; “we shall probably go on now at a very rapid pace, and great as my wish is to advance, by my presence, and my exhortations, so good a cause, yet I consider it as much forwarded, in this instance, by pleading with one soul, as by addressing hundreds. And when I consider the destiny of that soul while yet on earth, her influence over others, and the great preponderance she must ever hold, from those attractions which far outweigh the gifts of fortune,—oh ! Miss Carrington, I cannot but intreat you to listen dispassionately to all you will hear to-day !”

“I do not conceal from you,” replied Geraldine, “that I attend this meeting with great reluctance. I have been so highly favoured in hearing the controversial arguments of my uncle and Mr. Everard, that it will be in a spirit of endurance,

not of enquiry, that I shall listen to the comparatively ignorant speakers of to-day."

"Pardon me," said Lord Hervey eagerly, "but I consider the Warden to hold the most *legal* and anti-scriptural views of Gospel truth: and, as for our friend, Everard, his state is truly alarming. You have been placed in most dangerous hands. Oh! if I dared hope—if I dared advise—God alone is witness of the heart-felt interest——"

"I will not enquire," said Geraldine, "by what means your lordship became informed of my late studies, and of the conviction, gradually admitted, of the truth of Catholicity; for I am more anxious to explain what I really do believe, and to ask from you a patient hearing——"

"I dare not—I dare not. I have no right to tamper with error, the more dangerous, because imparted by your lips. I could not listen to you unmoved; and though I believe nothing could make that soul fall away which has been once born anew in the Lord, yet I should doubtless be punished by vacillation and distress of mind."

"Have you never listened to argument, or even explanation, from any Catholic? Are you condemning that of which you are ignorant, and in that ignorance, avowed and gloried in, are you preparing to address hundreds within an hour?—Oh! Lord Hervey, can this be rational—can it be Christian?"



“ I cannot plead ignorance,” said he, “ while, in the precious Word of life, I see the prophetic description of the great apostacy, and the warning to God’s people, to ‘ come out from Babylon, that they be not partakers of her plagues.’ ”

“ But, supposing that, by the same Divine Word, *I* see every reason to appropriate to the ancient and unchangeable Catholic Church, all those beautiful and touching prophecies, respecting the true Spouse of Christ, to be found also in the Revelation, as well as in other parts of the Scripture, and that I do not admit, from historical fact, that *Christian* Rome and Babylon are the same.”

“ Do not let us argue to-day,” said Lord Hervey, again slackening his pace, “ we shall have enough of that ; but tell me—if I dare ask, and pardon me, if I encroach on the long friendship of our families—has no undue influence been attempted, in leading you to think thus ?”

“ My arguments have been held entirely with Protestants, up to this time,” replied Geraldine. “ It is true that I have frequently sought Lady Winefride, for explanation on some points which I do not yet understand ; but she has decidedly declined giving me the assistance I require.”

“ For what reason ?” said Lord Hervey, much surprised.

“ Because she thinks that I have read, and

thought, and argued, quite enough, and that my only part now, is constant and fervent prayer."

"Prayer! yes, prayer to the Virgin and the saints, who can no more help you, than these stones and brambles. A papist knows not what is prayer."

"The Roman Catholic begs the prayers of his glorified brethren, but he also, and principally, prays for himself to the Lord of all power and might."

"I do not understand these distinctions and subtleties," replied Lord Hervey impatiently.

"And yet you understand the distinction between loving your father, and loving God.—You do not confound these two feelings."

"Tell me," said Lord Hervey; "are you personally acquainted with the young papist, who has just fitted up the ruined abbey near Elverton, as a chapel and dwelling-house for the priest?"

"Who has done this?" asked Geraldine, in her turn.

"Do you not know then?" was the additional enquiry of Lord Hervey.

"No; I only suspect it to be Sir Eustace De Grey."

"You do know him, then?" said he.

"Very slightly," replied Geraldine.

Lord Hervey drew his breath, as though he

kept silence most painfully, and stopped within a few yards of the carriage, into which Mr. Everard had now handed Miss Graham, all being pronounced "quite right and safe" by the servants.

If, however, his lordship had wished to address some last words to Geraldine, he was still prevented by some stronger feeling, and he suddenly walked quickly forward, and assisted her into the carriage, taking his seat as before; and little was said by any of the party, except on the neutral subject of the restive horse, till they drove up the High-street of Elverton, and stopped at the entrance of the Town Hall.

Although they had arrived half an hour before the chair was to be taken, the Hall was crowded, and the difficulty of entrance was extreme. At length, however, the pink tickets, and the names of the party, secured a free passage to the reserved seats, and Geraldine found herself once more amongst the well-known faces of the "serious world" at Elverton, being introduced to their recognition under false colours, which completely baffled them. Lord Hervey seemed determined to make his escort as conspicuous as possible, not only remaining by Geraldine's side, and thence bowing or nodding to his friends on the platform, but greeting also the fair party from the Priory, who had secured seats on the opposite side, and those also who, later than himself, were toiling

past him up the narrow and impeded path. Amongst these was the already oft-mentioned Major Tankerville, brother to the late Lady Hervey, and confessor-general to the serious coteries of Grosvenor Square and Park Lane. His half-shut eyes expanded with so much surprise and pleasure, on seeing Miss Carrington, that it was evident, that her state of mind was known to him ; and, notwithstanding Geraldine's chilling manner, he ran over the usual commonplaces against the 'great apostacy,' 'Babylon,' 'delusion of works,' &c. &c., till some one enquired, who was to take the chair, for it was reported that Sir Thomas Belfast had the gout ?

"Yes !" replied Major Tankerville, "unfortunately, the meeting cannot have the benefit of his presence, and, as Lord Hungerford declines, we have voted the great county proprietor, Lord ——, to take the chair. Not that he has precisely those clear views, that I should wish, but he has great popular eloquence, and is a staunch advocate of Reformation principles against anti-Christ."

"And have I really been so daring, or so weak, (for I know not which to call it) as to consent to listen to all this stupid invective, during three coming hours at least, and with but a slender chance of either Catholic explanation, or Protestant candour," thought Geraldine, as the gentlemen now left her to mount the platform.

“ Pray, may I enquire,” said an unknown lady to Geraldine, “ who are the two gentlemen who attended you here ? I should not presume to ask, but that I have frequently seen them at the London meetings, during the first week in May, and therefore look on them as public characters.”

“ Lord Hervey and Major Tankerville,” replied Geraldine.

“ Ah ! they are well known to me by report, as being indeed brothers in the Lord, and doubtless they are raised up for great purposes in these awful times of popish revival,” was the reply, followed by the question,—“ Have you heard what prayers are to be used, and whether any hymn will be sung ?”

To this Geraldine could not reply ; but another lady, hearing the question, turned round, and informed them, that, as there had been such dissensions about the prayers, it had been at length agreed upon, between the Church party and the orthodox dissenters, to use only the ‘ Lord’s-prayer,’ and ‘ Doxology,’ with the ‘ Old Hundredth Psalm.’

At this instant, the signal was given from the platform, the whole assembly rose, and, in his touching and sonorous voice, the Rev. Edmund Sinclair, as minister of the parish, gave forth the model for all prayer. Geraldine’s heart beat with a variety of emotions during its recital, especially when, at the close, she looked up, and saw the

countenance of this beloved relative irradiated with heartfelt devotion.

“Ladies and gentlemen,” at length began the noble chairman, “the fulness and respectability of this meeting, is most cheering and inspiring to my heart, and gives me every confidence, that, under the blessing of heaven, this town, from its central and important position, and from the zeal of its inhabitants, may prove of increasing importance, and a source of blessing to the land.” (Hear ! hear ! from the principal tradespeople and inn-keepers of Elverton.) “And I say,” continued his lordship, “that never was there a time, in the history of England, when the true zeal and courage of her sons were more required against a dangerous and implacable foe, than at the present era ! a foe that threatens us again with those chains, from which our forefathers so nobly freed us—a foe, that is as subtle as he is cruel ; as ungrateful as he is treacherous ; as cowardly as he is cunning. This foe, my friends, this foe, is Popery ! (cheers at the climax) and, my friends, let me impress on your national and loyal hearts, that we want no foreign importation into our free island, (hear ! ) no tampering with our glorious constitution. (Hear ! hear ! ) We do not require foreign priests, and foreign faith, to teach us our duty towards God and the king. (Hear ! hear ! hear ! ) No ! my friends, Popery is no English-

man !! (Immense cheering.) We are here assembled, in the name of the dauntless Luther, to trace the ignorance, the superstition, the idolatry, that he once overthrew. (Hear !) We invoke the spirit of the great Reformer, for the same glorious work. What was their cause, is our cause, and their watchword is our watchword—the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible !!!”

The noble lord sate down amidst immense cheering, and the treasurer to the society advanced, to hope, in his turn, that the funds, which were very low, would be replenished by the pious liberality of the assembly. “For,” added he, “the rapid increase of the Roman Catholic religion among all classes of society, and the multiplication of their places of worship, equalled only by the coldness and indifference of Protestants, throw a weight on the British Society, for promoting the religious principles of the Reformation, which they feel unequal to bear.”

The treasurer then read the statement of the receipts and expenditure of the past year; and again addressing the audience, said,—“That the committee had deputed him, to express their final conviction, that the most imperious necessity required the exertions of those, who love the principles of the Bible, and glory in the religion of the Cross.—Their debt is large, near eight hun-

dred pounds, and their spirits depressed, by the painful necessity of their continued appeals."

After the treasurer had sat down, the secretary arose, to read the report of the labours of the society during the preceding year, in which their marches, and counter-marches, being productive of but two instances of seeming success, these anecdotes were thrown into a species of historical romance, for the excited and delighted ladies of Elverton. The horrors of popery, the cruel tyranny of the priests, the ignorant, deluded peasantry, formed subjects for eloquent declamation; but the actual facts were simply these: first, that a Catholic labourer, having quarrelled with his priest, had gone to America with his child, to read his Bible, and judge for himself of the true faith! (hear! hear!): second, that a Catholic priest himself had borrowed some controversial tracts from the Reformation Society, (hear! hear!) and had been heard to say, that he found much subject for thought in them. (Hear! hear! hear!)

Geraldine found it impossible here to repress a smile, but the multitude around her saw no barrenness of material in the report; the fancy being warmed, and the ear pleased, by the accompanying phrases of—"And though we cannot positively say, &c., yet we may confidently hope," &c. "The Lord's arm is not shortened, that it cannot save."



“ We know in whom we trust. “ We must not despise the day of small things,” &c. In this way was filled a respectably sized manuscript, which at length was wound up by reading the first motion of the day :—“ That the report be printed,” &c. ; and the secretary, before retiring to his seat, now announced Viscount Hervey !

Great cheering welcomed the young nobleman, and Geraldine, notwithstanding her disapproval of the active part he was taking, against what she now received as the truth, found herself listening with breathless attention to the opening of his speech, which, elegantly worded, and full of devout feeling, was yet delivered with great timidity ; and, while at each hesitation she felt her heart beat with anxiety, a smile of satisfaction lighted up her speaking countenance, when, after repeated plaudits of encouragement, from the platform and the audience below, Lord Hervey mastered his nervous sensations, and entered with warmth into that branch of the subject, to which he had especially devoted his attention before entering the lists against the Catholic faith, namely, the fatal error inculcated by that “ false Church,” that man’s works have in them any merit, instead of relying solely for justification on the Saviour, and living by faith in him.

No longer rendered anxious by an inexplicable

wish for his public success, Geraldine could now give her whole attention to the subject, apart from the man, and mourned, as she listened to the extraordinary misapprehension of each other's accredited and published sentiments, existing between the Catholic and Protestant Church, on this never-ending topic of 'Faith and Works.' She recalled to mind her researches into the 'Faith of Catholics,' and the following declaration respecting 'Justification, and the merit of good works:—

"When man has sinned, the remission or pardon of sin is not attainable by him otherwise, than in and by the merits and sufferings of Jesus Christ, who freely purchased our ransom. Secondly, it is only through the same merits of Jesus Christ, that the just man can obtain either an increase of holiness in this life, or eternal happiness in the next. Thirdly, the good works of a just man proceeding from grace and charity, are so far acceptable to God, through his goodness and sacred promises, as to be truly deserving an eternal reward, God crowning his own gifts when he crowns the good works of his servants. The merits of Christ, though infinite in themselves, are not applied to us without a right faith in him."

Geraldine also perfectly remembered the extract she had made from the Council of Trent, on the subject of 'Justification by Faith,' and the reward promised to 'good works.' "Though no man

can be just but he to whom the merits of the passion of Christ are communicated, yet this is done in the justification of the sinner, when, by the merit of that passion, the charity of God is infused into the hearts of them that are justified, and dwells therein: whence, together with the remission of sins, man receives, through Jesus Christ, the virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity. Wherefore, to them who do well unto the end, eternal life ought to be proposed, both as a grace which is mercifully promised to them, through Jesus Christ, and as a recompense of their good works and merits, in virtue of this promise. And, as Jesus Christ perpetually sheds his influence on them that are justified, which influence *precedes*, and accompanies, and follows, all their good works, and without which no works can be pleasing to God, we must believe that nothing is now wanting to render them deserving of eternal life, provided they depart this life in the fear of God. Although in the Scriptures good works are so much valued, that Jesus Christ himself promises, that a cup of cold water shall not lose its reward, and the apostle testifies, that a momentary pain endured in this world, shall produce an eternal weight of glory; nevertheless, God forbid that a Christian should trust or glory in himself, and not in the Lord, whose bounty is so great to all men, that he will

have those gifts which he bestows upon them to be their merits."

Geraldine, whose deep interest in this subject had enabled her to retain all this explicit declaration of the last council of the Catholic Church, now also recalled as accurately the twelfth article of the English Church, as follows:—"Albeit that good works, which are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgement, yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith, insomuch, that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known, as a tree by its fruit." All this passed through the region of Geraldine's comparison and judgment; and although, in every difference between the ancient universal Church, and that of England, she now saw reason to abide implicitly by the former, yet she could not but wonder at the wide breach between them on this question of 'Faith and Works,' which could only be accounted for by the great advance of Calvinistic principles, which, instead of being confined to one article, (the seventeenth) in the Church of England, was creeping over the whole. From these recollections and reflections Geraldine was recalled to the speech, by the repeated applause it produced; and she suffered her attention no more to wander.

Lord Hervey continued to expose what he really took for granted to be the fatal self-righteousness of the Catholics (never having read their books, nor listened to a word of explanation, nor attended their service, in his life); and it was with a mixture of indignation and sorrow that Geraldine heard those hackneyed falsehoods repeated and enforced from the lips of him, whose piety demanded her respect, and whose tenderness towards herself, had produced a feeling of interest and gratitude, which made her listen with a painful conflict of feeling. Towards the close, however, of his speech, Lord Hervey expanded into several beautiful expressions of his hope, that those, his erring brethren, might be brought to serve the Saviour in simplicity and truth, and that the devout of that Church (for he would not doubt there were such) might receive grace to become as lights to the rest. To such he would say, as Jesus did to Peter,—“When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.” Scarcely had Lord Hervey resumed his seat, amidst general applause, on the right hand of the chairman, when Major Tankerville, who was then announced, began by expressing his sorrow at finding himself necessitated to differ on one point, and on one point only, from his noble and highly-esteemed friend, who had just addressed the meeting. He (Major

Tankerville) felt convinced that a little explanation was alone required: but, at the close of the speech, his noble friend had not quite clearly expressed his views of the Saviour's kingdom, that it was a 'little flock'—'that many were called, but few chosen;' that we were commanded to 'come out and be separated,' and to 'touch not the unclean thing.' At these words, Lord Hervey rose to explain, that he entirely agreed with his gallant friend, adding a few words, which appeared to satisfy the Major; who now proceeded to prove, not only that Catholics were anti-Christians, but that three-quarters of the Protestants then listening to him, were 'children of wrath,' that, in fact, the 'little flock' would prove much smaller than even many regenerated persons supposed, whose views were still confused, and who judged of the Almighty by their own corrupt hearts, instead of by the text of Scripture. "Alas!" thought Geraldine, "how is that sacred volume desecrated by the presumptuous appropriation of its meaning by every flippant reader."

But Major Tankerville had not yet reduced the number of the elect to that select half dozen, self-included, to which, after an hour's quoting, and proving, and denouncing, he finally limited salvation, much to his own satisfaction, and to that of the so-called 'serious party' in Elverton, many of

whom were seated near Geraldine, and who, after nodding and elbowing their assent and sympathy, gave utterance at length to their feelings in a loud and lengthened tribute to the Major's theology, that again sent our heroine into a pondering fit. But it was now a philosophical enquiry into that love of safety, which is enhanced by the danger and distress of others, and had just arrived at the conviction, that selfishness is the mother of Calvinism, when a fresh speaker was announced—the Rev. Dr. Dunning, from Bristol. To him succeeded a Rev. Mr. Smithson, from Birmingham; and thirdly, a Mr. Small, from Quebec. These two last were dissenters. Each began by assuring the audience that he could say nothing after what had been so ably said, &c., yet each hammered on the railing of the platform during a weary half hour, while he “trusted,” and “felt convinced,” and “considered,” and “entirely agreed,” and “gave his tribute,” and spoke of the “man of sin,” and of “anti-Christ,” and of the “mystery of iniquity,” and of “Babylon,” till weariness stole over the assembly, and many of the party from Sedgemoor Priory were devising means of escape, when, as the last diluted repetitions of Mr. Small drew to a close, some animated discussion apparently took place among the gentlemen on the platform, with frequent references

to the chair. Mr. Everard was seen to advance and succeed Major Tankerville in gaining the ear of the noble chairman, and at length Lord —— arose, and announced to the meeting, that he had the pleasure to introduce Sir Eustace De Grey, a Catholic proprietor of that county !



## CHAPTER VI.

Without history a man is purblind, seeing only the things which almost touch his eyes.

FULLER.

LITTLE had Geraldine expected that any thing from that platform could have softened the proud calm, the stern endurance, with which she had nerved herself to bear the torrent of misapprehension and invective, which had been, and was still to be, poured forth on that day; and those alone who have known what it is to become apparently blunted in feeling, from meeting with constant disapproval and opposition of opinion, can understand the sudden gush of tears, which filled Geraldine's eyes, as she saw, amidst the crowded assembly, one who felt as she felt! These were happy tears!

"My Lord," said Sir Eustace, addressing the chairman, "I thank you for your liberality, which has permitted a member of an aspersed Church to stand up in her defence, and to offer some explanation of the infatuation, or, if you please, madness,

which could induce an Englishman of independence and education to glory in the name of Catholic ! In you, my Lord, I address a layman, and therefore, to your opening speech of popular eloquence will I confine myself, while, leaving to a far abler expositor than myself the *doctrines* of the ancient Church, I reply to the challenge your Lordship holds out respecting the influence of the Catholic faith on the honour, the bravery, the national independence, and constitutional laws of England. As truth is every man's property, it is essential to the common good, that each one should regard it with veneration, and carefully seek its defence against every assailant ; for in every storm it is a shelter, in every danger a panoply, in every battle a refuge, and a balm in every time of trouble. Whatever side a man may take, if clad in this armour, he will ' never be ashamed to meet his enemy in the gate.' Still, in a conflict, in which each side not only claims, but may honestly think, they possess, the truth, the only touchstone, is historical record, and facts, not sentiments, must be our aim.

“ Let me then first ask who granted to Englishmen the famous trial by jury, and laid the foundation of our boasted Constitution ? The *Catholic* Alfred ! Who gained for them Magna Charta ? The *Catholic* barons of England, with a *Catholic* archbishop at their head.— Who won the glorious

fields of Cressy, Poitiers, and Agincourt? The *Catholic* armies of our land, under our *Catholic* Edwards and Henry. And let me further ask, had the Catholic Irish been withdrawn from our men-of-war, or from the ranks of our armies, on the eve of the modern achievements of British valour—what would have been the fate of those desperately contested battles?—what would have been the issue of Aboukir, of Trafalgar, of the fields of the Peninsula? It would not have been even *doubtful* at Waterloo!"—(hear, hear.) "My dear countrymen, contemplate for an instant the true position of the Catholic soldier or sailor, and then judge of his patriotism, and of his bravery. During the whole of the late wars, the heavy yoke of spiritual tyranny forbade his ever aspiring to a post of trust and glory—yet he fought on! He knew that he must hopelessly endure, in addition to the humiliation of inferior rank, the scoffs and banterings, and often the open insults, of the favoured Protestant—yet he fought on! That noble ambition, which has ever led to brighter deeds than mere animal courage, that ambition was denied him—yet he fought for England's glory; he merged himself in his country's fame!" (applause.)—"Nor is this all. There have been times when the heavily taxed and impoverished Catholic nobleman or gentleman, has entered so zealously into the martial spirit of the day, as to

drain his remaining resources to fit out a company of volunteers, the command of which (it being denied himself) he must necessarily give to a Protestant, while he fought in the ranks!—and doubtless, while he did so—a contemned and despised Catholic—the pure offering he made his country was viewed by the countless armies of heaven, and the laurels denied him here, were laid up in store for the brave Machabee! My Lord, I would further observe, in reply to your Lordship's remark, that 'Popery is no Englishman,' that "a nation may be in possession of the truth, but truth is not national!"\*—('Bravo!' cried the sympathetic voice of Mr. Everard from the back of the platform.)—"The Catholic Englishman cherishes his country—can sacrifice self-interest to her glory—can die in her defence: but his expansive creed teaches him to love all mankind, especially those of the 'household of faith,' which, in his universal Church, are of every tribe and every nation. Far be from him that narrow-minded exclusiveness, that spreading out of self, which can see nothing good out of England, because *he* was born in England, and, obstinately refusing to see the vices of his land, opens his eyes to nothing but the corruptions of other nations.

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\* A remark by the author of "Four years in France," the able and lamented Mr. Best, formerly a clergyman of the Church of England, and a convert to the Catholic Church.

I have listened to several declarations to day, from the speakers who have preceded me, that the chief pastor of the Catholic Church was Antichrist : but" —(here Sir Eustace was stopped by an amendment from Lord Hervey, that the 'office,' and not the 'person,' of the Pope was Antichrist, as proved by Scripture. Sir Eustace bowed and proceeded.) " If the office of a visible head to Christ's Church be antichristian, the following deductions are inevitable :—First, that England was converted to Christianity by Antichrist ! Pope Gregory having sent Augustine, with other missionaries, for that purpose, in the year 590 : Secondly. That the 'Man of Sin' also preached repentance and grace to Ireland, Pope Celestin having sent St. Patrick thither for that purpose : And lastly. That heathen nations were everywhere converted to the 'religion of the cross,' and 'to the mark of the beast,' at the same instant, it being an historical fact, that no missionaries went forth, excepting those in communion with Rome, until the sixteenth century. Your Lordship invokes the spirit of Luther, and of the rest of the Reformers, but, having studied their correspondence, and their various formularies of faith, I question whether they would not be much surprised at the greater part of the theology advanced by the gentlemen on the platform this morning. At any rate, I would suggest that, as Luther and Calvin each devoutly consigned the

other to hell, it might be safer not to invoke their assistance!"—(a laugh.)—"In reply to the last and most imposing part of your Lordship's brilliant address, namely, 'The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible!' I will, with the permission of your Lordship and the meeting, read the declaration of the Catholic Bishops, published in 1822."—(hear, hear.)—"But, before doing so, permit a few comments on this high-sounding cry of Protestants. Catholics naturally inquire whether those, who have abridged the Bible, should raise the clamour of the 'whole Bible,' against those who have preserved every part of the written word of God untouched, from the time when the canon of Scripture was fixed by the early Church? Catholics continue to receive as inspired, eight books which the Protestants reject,—therefore, this watchword can only raise a smile. With the same surprise, Catholics listen to the last declaration, of 'nothing but the Bible;' for they find that the patrons and subscribers of the Bible Society, are likewise the zealous promoters of the Tract Society; and that, after endeavouring, by every argument and illustration, to prove that the 'Bible alone' is a sufficient guide to heaven, the same men, when addressing the last mentioned society, exert all their reasoning and eloquence, to prove the utility and blessed effects

of these separate notes and comments called tracts! Catholics are also aware, that each Protestant sect has a favourite and appropriate Bible, of which the notes suit the opinions of that particular body. The High Church of England has authorized the notes collected from their venerated theologians, by Bishops Mant and D'Oyley, as proper explanations to the unlearned of the true meaning of Scripture; and this Bible, with its copious and learned notes, is also published in cheap editions, to be circulated amongst the poor. The Low Church party have also their Bible, with the 'private interpretation of the Calvinist Scott; and an old lady of my acquaintance might have expressed the feeling of the whole body when she exclaimed, "As long as I can read dear Mr. Scott's notes, and look at his picture, I feel quite safe!"—(a laugh.) "There is also known to be a certain Matthew Henry's Bible, with his comments for the Independants, or Nonconformists; so that Catholics, when fully acquainted with these fresh inconsistencies and contradictions, may be permitted to smile again at this high sounding cry of 'The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible,' which, like all bombast, means nothing." Sir Eustace then read the "Declaration of the Catholic Bishops," as follows:—

## DECLARATION OF THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS.

PUBLISHED IN 1822.

“On the Holy Scriptures.—In England, the Catholic Church is held out as *an enemy to the reading and circulating of the Holy Scriptures*. Whereas the Catholic Church venerates the Holy Scriptures as the written part of the word of God. She has in all ages been the faithful guardian of this sacred deposit; she has laboured to preserve the integrity of these inspired writings, and the true sense in which they have been universally understood at all times from the apostolic age. The Catholic Church has never forbidden or discouraged the reading and circulating of authentic copies of the sacred Scriptures in the original languages. She binds her clergy to the daily recital of the canonical office, which comprises a large portion of the sacred volume, and to read and expound to the faithful in the vernacular tongue on Sundays, the epistle and gospel of the day, or some other portion of the divine law. As to the translations of the Holy Scriptures into modern languages, the Catholic Church requires that none should be put into the hands of the faithful, but such as are acknowledged, by ecclesiastical authority, to be accurate, and conformable to the sense of the originals. There never was a general law



of the Catholic Church prohibiting the reading of authorized translations of the Scriptures; but, considering that many, by their ignorance and evil dispositions, have perverted the meaning of the sacred text to their own destruction, the Catholic Church has thought it prudent to make a regulation, that the faithful should be guided in this matter by the advice of their respective pastors. Whether the Holy Scriptures, which ought never to be taken in hand but with respect, should be made a class-book for children, is a matter of religious and prudential consideration, on which the pastors of the Catholic Church have a right to decide with regard to their own flocks: and we hold that, in this matter, none have a right to dictate to them.

“The Catholics in England, of maturer years, have permission to read authentic and approved translations of the Holy Scriptures with explanatory notes: and are exhorted to read them in the spirit of piety, humility, and obedience.

“Pope Pius the Seventh, in a rescript dated April the 13th, 1823, and addressed to the Vicars Apostolic in England, earnestly exhorts them to confirm the people committed to their spiritual care, in faith and good works: and, for that end, to encourage them to read books of pious instruction, and particularly the Holy Scriptures, in translations approved by ecclesiastical authority; because, to those who are well disposed, nothing

can be more useful, more consoling, or more animating, than the reading of the Holy Scriptures, understood in their true sense,—they serve to confirm the faith, support the hope, and to inflame the charity of the true Christian. But when the reading and circulation of the Scriptures are urged and recommended as the entire rule of faith, as the sole means by which men are to be brought to the certain and specific knowledge of the doctrines, precepts, and institutions of Christ; and when the Scriptures so read and circulated are left to the interpretation and private judgment of each individual, then such reading, circulation, and interpretation, are forbidden by the Catholic Church, because she knows that the circulation of the Scriptures, and the interpretation of them by each one's private judgment, was not the means ordained by Christ for the communication of the true knowledge of His law of all nations. She knows that Christianity was established in many countries before one book of the New Testament was written—that it was not by means of the Scriptures, that the Apostles and their successors converted nations, or any one nation, to the unity of the Christian faith—that the unauthorised reading and circulation of the Scriptures, and the interpretation of them by private judgment, are calculated to lead men to contradictory doctrines on the primary articles of the Christian belief, to inconsistent

forms of worship, which cannot all be constituent parts of the uniform and sublime system of Christianity, to errors and fanaticism in religion, and to seditions, and the greatest disorders in states and kingdoms.' ”

This declaration was listened to with marked attention, when, after a short pause, Sir Eustace continued.—“To prove, by one little anecdote amongst a thousand, the misapprehension under which Protestants labour with respect to the biblical ignorance of Catholics, I will conclude this subject with mentioning a trifling occurrence which fell under my notice about three months since, when enjoying a tour in Switzerland, with some highly esteemed Protestant friends. One of the ladies of our party was much struck by the looks and manner of a little muleteer, who accompanied us, with others of his tribe, in our excursions round Berne, and asked him in French, whether he could read? ‘Oh yes! he could read, and liked reading very much.’ ‘Had he a Bible?’ ‘No! he had never seen one!’ My fair friend groaned over this proof of popish ignorance, and the next day lent the little fellow a cheap edition from the Tract Society in Paris of ‘Bible Stories,’ telling him they were all true, being taken from the Sacred Word of God. The following morning, Louis reappeared with his book, and the conclusion in the

mind of his fair patroness was, that priestcraft had interfered to prevent his acquaintance with Scripture. "What, had he not read the book?"

" ' Oh yes ! it was very pretty, but all the stories in the first part, he had read, and could repeat by heart, from ' L'Ancien Testament,' and all those in the second part, from ' Le Nouveau Testament.' "

" ' Why, then, he had read the Bible ! ' "

" ' Oh, had he ? He did not know any name but the two Testaments.' "

" ' And how came he to have read all those stories ? ' "

" ' Why his priest had taught them to him every Saturday evening, when he went up with the others to his Catechism ! ' " (Hear ! hear !)

" My Lord, in taking leave of this meeting, I would express, in the name of my fellow Catholics, our due sense of the good intentions of those, who would spare neither labour nor expense to provide us with Bibles, when, like the little muleteer, their precious contents have been taught us from our earliest infancy. We also thank you for the well-meaning exhortations you give us, to put our own construction on Scripture, in opposition to the interpretation of our Church : but we must see a far different result to the Protestant rule of faith, before we can be induced to leave our good mother. The advantages, nay the necessity, of having a living speaking authority, for preserving

peace and order in every society, is too obvious to be called in question. The Catholic Church has such an authority, but your different societies of Protestants, though claiming it, cannot effectually exercise it, on account of your opposite fundamental principle of each man's private judgment. When debates arise amongst Catholics, concerning points of faith, the pastors of the Church, like judges in civil contentions, fail not to examine them by the received rules of faith, and to pronounce an authoritative sentence upon them. The dispute is thus terminated, and peace restored ; for, if any party will not 'hear the Church,' he is of course 'considered as a heathen and a publican : ' but dissensions amongst your Protestant communities must be irremediable and endless, from your fundamental law of religious liberty. Let me assure you, likewise, my Protestant countrymen, that the same method, which Christ has appointed to keep peace in his Church, has also preserved it in the hearts of her children ; and while other Christians, who have no rule of faith, but their own fluctuating opinions, are carried away by every wind of doctrine, and are agitated by dreadful fears, as to the safety of the road they are in, Catholics, being moored to the rock of Christ's Church, have no apprehensions on this head. Their faith is clear to them—their sole anxiety is how best to fulfil its high demands

on their practice.” (Here one of the speakers on the platform observed, that a false security was most awful, crying “Peace—peace, when there was no peace !”) Sir Eustace then continued, with reference to this observation.—“ In justification of this confidence in the power granted to his Church to decide on matters of faith, the Catholic would reason thus :—‘ There was no time when a visible and speaking authority did not exist, to which submission was due. Before Jesus Christ, that authority was in the Synagogue ; when the Synagogue was on the point of failing, Jesus Christ himself appeared ; when that Divine Being withdrew, he left a Church, and with it his Holy Spirit. Tell me that Christ once more appears upon earth, teaching, preaching, and working miracles, and I want that Church no longer. But has he not left, you would say, his written Word ? He has done so, a Word holy and adorable, but it is a Word that may be handled, and expounded, as fancy shall direct ; a Word that remains *silent* under every interpretation. (Hear ! hear !) When difficulties and doubts arise, then I must have some external guide.’\* The ancient Church, in possessing the affection and confidence of her children, claims equally the homage of their reason ; and, in reply to that intended reproach, so

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\* Bossuet.

frequently advanced to day, that the ‘ Catholic faith is a religion of the senses,’ I say,—you are right, my friends, our Catholic faith is a religion adapted to every sense, every faculty, every power possessed by man, and is therefore the only one to fully satisfy the yearnings of his complicated nature ; the only one to fill his heart, his mind, his soul, his strength ; the only one that can grasp the reach of the Almighty’s harmonious scheme of a Universal Church, formed of countless millions of every tribe and every language—divided not by the grave, death having no power over the perfect communion of saints ; having one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one Hope, in a glorious Resurrection unto life eternal !”

Here De Grey paused, and bowing to the chairman and to the meeting, retired from the front of the platform ; and, whether it were from the novelty and excitement of hearing something on the opposite side of the question, or that the open countenance and manner of the young Catholic had softened their party prejudice, the applause at the conclusion of his address was given heartily and kindly, and many whispered encomiums followed, indicative of the discovery, that, although a papist, the young man had not turned out so great a fool as might have been expected. Room was politely made for him on the left hand of the chairman, and he had scarcely seated himself,

when the lion of the day was perceived to mount the steps of the platform, and amidst the perfect uproar of excitement and approval, the secretary, after several ineffectual efforts to be heard, at length raised his voice sufficiently to give forth, in resounding tones, the celebrated name of “ Mr. Shadowshake, that instant arrived from Ireland !” Fresh applause followed this announcement to the meeting of their favourite courier from the land of Hobgoblin, which applause was hushed into a perfect calm, as the reverend gentleman began to recount the terrific wonders and marvellous acts of popery in the sister isle ; when, after nearly an hour’s address, during which he had seen, heard, conjectured, supposed, believed, and taken for granted, more Satanic exploits than any one who had not followed Mephistophiles over the Brocken, Mr. Shadowshake clasped his hands, and exclaimed,—“ Indeed ! indeed ! my heart weeps tears of blood for Ireland. My unhappy country has become a den of wild beasts ;—yes, the Romish priests are wild beasts, they are hyenas ! !”\*

With this the reverend Reformer sank back exhausted, his face covered with the sympathetic dew of fear—and heat ; and a glass of water was handed to him, as he reposed at the back of the platform.

The noble chairman now put to the “ Ayes”

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\* Extracts from a speech made in Exeter Hall.



and “Noes” of the assembly, whether, before breaking up the meeting, with the concluding prayer and psalm, an Irish gentleman, who had come over from Ireland in the same packet with Mr. Shadowshake, should be permitted to address the meeting on the subject of Ireland’s religion, and Ireland’s distress, for the space of half an hour? The “Ayes” carried it, and one of the most sunny countenances that Erin could produce, presented itself at the railing of the platform, and in a strong Irish accent Mr. O’Niel thus began:—

“I am indebted to the courage of the noble lord and his friends on the platform, for the liberty allowed me of advancing to this barrier, from which, having in honour bound myself not to leap down among you, I may venture to acknowledge, even to the timid sex here present, that I am a—wild beast! in fact, a hyena! (loud laughter)—to the excited imagination, at least, of my honest countryman, who has just preceded me. Yes! my English fellow Christians,” continued he, in a changed and deeply impressive tone, “I am an Irish Catholic priest! one of that race, whose cruelty, rapacity, and usurped power, have been the theme held up this day, for your execration. And now, what can I reply? Why this—that we Irish Catholic priests, have learned your notions of us, and, as the servants of him, who, when he was reviled, reviled not again, have also learned

forbearance, and compassion for the calumnies you utter. (Hear ! hear !) We consider that, with the earliest dawn of life, the infant mind is compelled to imbibe the fables of false men, that, as the infant mind expands, it is only to take in a larger quantity of anti-Christian prejudice, and that, when arrived at maturity, it is still presented with these fables in another form ; so that, from the cradle to the pulpit, the Protestant mind is fed with nothing but falsehoods ! May we not then be surprised that we are treated with *any* forbearance or indulgence ? (Hear !) This I address solely to the innocently ignorant ; but I have something to say to the wilfully ignorant also, and it is this :—For three hundred years have the Catholics of these realms declared their faith, and Protestants have refused to hear it ! For three hundred years have Catholic books of faith been published, and Protestants have refused to open them ! To what, then, have you listened ?—to Protestant tradition ! What, then, have you read ? —Protestant dreams and fictions ! and is this the way to understand the faith you condemn ? And shall I regret that no better specimen of the Irish priesthood is before you, than one, whose rustic appearance, and habits of seclusion amongst the simple poor of his own land, so little fit him to address this refined and brilliant assembly ? Shall I regret that no practised controversialist, no

finished orator, presents himself, to answer all the charges brought against us?—No ! it matters not ! In his simple way has Patrick O’Niel addressed such meetings before : he has, by the force of truth alone, compelled the suffrages of the benches below, and the apologies of the platform around him ; his clerical opponents and himself have seemed to part as brethren ; and, in a week or two, these very men have formed a meeting at their next station, and repeated the calumnies for which they had just apologised. (Hear ! hear !)

‘ My dear sir,’ said I, to one of these Reformation gentlemen, whom I met soon after this repetition of injury, ‘ I thought you had begun to know and esteem the Catholic priests, and I am surprised and hurt at your late speech !’ ‘ My dear sir,’ says he, ‘ no one can esteem the Catholic priests more than I do, as individuals ; I only attack the priesthood in general.’ ‘ Ah ! my dear sir,’ says I, ‘ it is a peculiarity attached to the Catholic priesthood, that, as individuals, we are all children of God, and in the lump, all children of the devil. (a laugh.) Just now, in leaving Cork for Bristol, I meet another agent for this society, whom I find running off with a wrong end of a story, and I very innocently go after putting him right. ‘ My good sir,’ says he, ‘ not a word against my story, if you please, for I am at the fag end of my tour and—I want anecdotes !’ (much laughter.) Now,

my friends, allow me to congratulate you on the budget which the Rev. Mr. Shadowshake has opened for your amusement to day, and, in comparison with which, I fear my stock will prove but scanty. However, as my countryman has said so much respecting the Catholic priesthood, as being inimical to the moral and religious education of the people, perhaps you would like an '*anecdote*' on that subject. (Hear ! hear !) Scarcely a speech has been uttered this day, but it has been said of Ireland, that 'darkness covered the land, and gross darkness the people;' and I admit that, during many years, the dearth of learning was most lamentable. (Hear.) Ah, my friends, you are pleased with this concession on my part ! wait a little, however, for I shall expect the same candour from you ! Our enquiry is, whether this ignorance was owing to the priesthood. From the year 1695, to the year 1782, an act of your Parliament was in force, in Ireland, by which the Catholic priest, and the Catholic Schoolmaster, were transported, if the one were discovered instructing the people in the mysteries of religion, or the other teaching the children the simple elements of education. (Hear ! hear !) This act extended to Catholic printers and booksellers, and by no means remained a dead letter, as four hundred and twenty-four priests were shipped off, and large rewards offered to any one who should find

the unlawful practice of education going forward. My dear old father is still alive, he is fast approaching his ninety-ninth year, and to this day he boasts of having got his learning as he got his whiskey—both illegally. (a laugh.) Yes! in bogs, under hedges, and in deep vallies, the priest and schoolmaster carried on their illicit process of education, while some of the boys stood on the neighbouring hill, to give the alarm, if the *Discoverers*, as they were called, should appear in view, to catch, and send the Catholic tutors abroad. (Hear! hear!) Now, my friends, take this fact. It is not yet fifty years since these Protestant laws were repealed, so that every Irish Catholic beyond the age of fifty, who can read or write, reads and writes illegally. He got his learning in violation of the laws at home, or he smuggled it from the continent. And now what think you? Why, a truce to pleasantry, when those men, who regret that these cruel, tyrannical laws were ever repealed, are the persons to come forward, and taunt us with our ignorance. (Hear! hear!) Yes! they, and such as they, have walled up, and would again wall up, the fountain of knowledge, and then reproach us with not having drunk deep of it! They seal up the volume of science, and if we stretch forth a hand to open it, they strike, and, while striking, wantonly reproach us for being ignorant of its contents. (Hear!

hear ! hear !) But, never shall it be forgotten—to the glory of Ireland is it recorded—that, in the cause of literature and science, as in the more holy cause of religion, she has suffered persecution ! (Loud cheers.) And can her sons forget that there *was* a time, when the youth of other countries flocked to her renowned seminaries and colleges, when, by the divines of other countries, she was styled, the ‘ Isle of Saints,’ when, in her freedom, in her glory, in her domestic peace, Ireland was Catholic—wholly, purely, Catholic ? And now, when you would change the faith that made her glory, and her peace, have not her groans, her tears, her passionate appeals—have not her anguish, her crimes, her deep, deep curses, told you what your new religion would make old Ireland ? (Hear ! hear ! hear !) Yes ! Protestant dissent has laid low the flower of nations ! She lies bleeding, and you would fain poison the only balm that can heal her wounds—that balm which is found in the love, the trust, the veneration, which her noble children feel for their priests—those pastors who have entered in at the door of the sheepfold, by apostolical and sacramental ordination, not climbing over, as ‘ thieves and hirelings, whose own the sheep are not.’ These shepherds are ready to lay down their lives for their flock, and the flock feel this. They have, in undertaking the solemn work of the ministry, left all for

their spiritual children. Like their divine example, they can say, ‘ Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?’ And can you hope that the adopted children should not feel this? Can you hope to sever ties, which are knit to the rock of ages? No! my dissenting friends, give over your hopeless cause;—‘ It is hard to kick against the pricks!’ Turn, with the great convert St. Paul, to serve the Church you have hitherto persecuted, thinking to do God service! Or if this seem to you yet impossible, at any rate pause from the violation of Christian charity; for, oh! has it never struck you, that the position, in which you have placed yourselves, is a most awful one—that of bearing false witness, that of inducing strife and contention, which are the works of the devil? My Bible-quoting friends, who pique yourselves on remembering every word of sacred writ, can you not *act* on that beautiful assurance, ‘ Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God?’ But, indeed, I would hope, that many who are here, love to be peace-makers, and shrink from bearing false witness against their neighbour. I would hope, that many who are here, have never heard or read a word of Catholic verity in their lives. If such, then, there be here present, I invite them to listen to the following solemn declarations, from the mouth of a Catholic priest; but remember, that, in hearing them, your plea of

ignorance is over, and that, from this date, any misrepresentation of the faith of Catholics, is a deliberate breach of God's commandment, and a compact with the father of lies !

“ ‘ \*Cursed is he, who commits idolatry, who prays to images or relics, or worships them for God.’ ” At the end of this, and each following anathema, Sir Eustace De Grey, in a loud and stern voice, answered, “ Amen.”

“ ‘ Cursed is every goddess worshipper, who believes the Virgin Mary to be more than a creature, who adores her, or puts his trust in her equally to God ; who believes her above her son, or that she can in anything command him :’ ” “ Amen.”

“ ‘ Cursed is he, who believes the saints in heaven to be his redeemers : who prays to them as such, or who gives God's honour to them or to any creature whatsoever :’ ” “ Amen.”

“ ‘ Cursed is he who worships any bread in God, or makes God of the empty elements of bread and wine :’ ” “ Amen.”

“ ‘ Cursed is he who believes that priests can forgive sins, whether the sinner repent or not : or that there is any power on earth or heaven that can forgive sins without a hearty repentance, and serious purpose of amendment :’ ” “ Amen.”



“ ‘ Cursed is he who believes that, independent of the merits and passion of Christ, he can obtain salvation by his own good works, or make condign satisfaction for the guilt of his sins, or the eternal pains due to them :’ ” “ Amen.”

“ ‘ Cursed is he who contemns the word of God, or who hides it from the people, in order to keep them from the knowledge of their duty, and to preserve them in ignorance and error :’ ” “ Amen.”

“ ‘ Cursed is he who leaves the commandments of God, to observe the constitutions of men :’ ” “ Amen.”

“ ‘ Cursed is he who omits any of the ten commandments, or keeps the people from the knowledge of any one of them, to the end that they may not discover the truth :’ ” “ Amen.”

“ ‘ Cursed is he who preaches to the people in an unknown tongue, such as they understand not, or uses any other means to keep them in ignorance :’ ” “ Amen.”

“ ‘ Cursed is he who believes that the Pope can give to any one, upon any occasion whatever, dispensations to lie, or swear falsely ; or that it is lawful for any one, at the last hour, to protest himself innocent, if he be guilty :’ ” “ Amen.”

“ ‘ Cursed is he who encourages sin, or teaches men to defer the amendment of their lives, on presumption of a death-bed repentance.’ ” “ Amen.”

“ ‘ Cursed is he who places religion in nothing

but pompous shows and ceremonies, and who teaches not the people to serve God in spirit and in truth.” “Amen.”

“ ‘Cursed is he who loves or promotes cruelty : who teaches people to be bloody-minded, and to lay aside the meekness of Jesus Christ :’ ” “Amen.”

“ ‘Cursed is he who teaches it to be lawful to do any wicked thing, though it be for the interest and good of Mother Church, or that any evil action may be done, that good may ensue :’ ” “Amen.”

“ ‘Cursed are we, if, in answering ‘Amen’ to any of these curses, we use any equivocations or mental reservations, or do not assent to them in the common and obvious sense of the words :’ ” “Amen.”

“ ‘What !’ my friends, I hear you ask, ‘Is it possible that papists can seriously, and without check of conscience, say ‘Amen’ to all these curses ?’ Yes, they can, and are ready to do so, whensoever, and as often as shall be required of them. When Protestants, therefore, find that Catholics utterly reject the doctrines imputed to them, and this, too, in the most solemn manner, ought they not to bring forward some documents equally solemn ? (Hear !) And can they do so ? —No ! they cannot. (Hear ! hear !) On you, my hitherto ignorant friends, I trust these solemn declarations, in the name of the Catholic priest-

hood and laity, which my honoured brother in the faith, and myself, have given you, will find some resting place in your hearts and consciences, and that, on leaving this meeting, you will own that Catholics are not such as you had supposed them to be: while we, on our part, being aware that the night of prejudice cannot pass away in an hour, will await, I trust, in patience and humility, the dawn of a new day, when it shall be said, as in early times, ‘Behold how these Christians love one another.’ (Hear! hear!) Yes, my Protestant brethren, if you will now extend the right hand of fellowship towards us, it shall be accepted, not as the sign of a truce merely, but in token of an everlasting peace, worthy of that festival which is at hand, and on which we may together sing the glorious anthem of the angels—‘Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace and goodwill to men.’”\* Mr. O’Niel here left the meeting, amidst loud and continued cheers.

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\* Several parts of this speech are taken from those at the Reformation Meeting at Torbay, 1833.

## CHAPTER VII.

If thy heart were right, then every creature would be to thee a looking-glass of life, and a book of holy devotion.

*Thomas à Kempis.*

THE clock of the town-hall struck four, as the last verse was intoned of the old hundredth psalm, and all were now eager to depart, although, as it was perfectly dark, excepting the scattered lights on the platform, the ladies of the Sedgemoor party had been charged not to move, till their escort should have joined them. Colonel Torrington was the first to free his impatient wife, and Lady Anne, from the bench on which they had stiffened and yawned; and Sir John Scotney overtaking them at the door, the quartett drove off as they came. Colonel Torrington, who had been rendered anxious and distressed by the address of the Catholic Priest, was but little disposed to converse; still he had to pacify his disappointed wife, for not having given his intended speech; while Sir John had to endure the extravagant admiration of De Grey's appearance and grace of manner, on which

Lady Anne continued to expatiate with an irritation and peevishness to which poor Sir John had no clue, save in the consciousness of his own exterior deficiencies.

“I used to meet Sir Eustace de Grey for ever in Yorkshire, the winter before last,” sighed her ladyship, “and he used to admire me so much!”

“*I* cannot be surprised at that,” replied the good-humoured husband, “for I admired you, Anne, not only the winter before last, but during many winters.”

“But I had not an idea, at that time, that Sir Eustace could make such a speech. I am sure he always talked great nonsense to me at the balls. I wonder whether he and Miss Carrington are really engaged? As for her believing in the Roman Catholic religion, I do not credit a word of it, for really she is a very clever girl, though so dreadfully conceited, it is quite fatiguing: and I do not think she is at all the style of woman to attract Sir Eustace De Grey: but then her fortune is very convenient for him.”

“Oh, there is nothing in that attachment,” cried Mrs. Torrington: “I have reasons for knowing that Sir Eustace never thought of Miss Carrington, though she certainly did think of him, and therefore tried to admire all the absurdities of his creed: but Lord Hervey’s attentions have given a marked turn to her theology.”

“Yes, indeed,” returned Lady Anne; “I have seen enough to be aware that this far-famed heiress would have no objection to be a countess !”

“I do not know the woman who would object,” observed Colonel Torrington.

“Well,” continued his lady, “at any rate, Miss Carrington seems to have decided in favour of the Protestant coronet, else why should she have conveyed Lord Hervey in this public manner, to hear the Protestant cause defended, and have detained him so long, talking to her, that I thought he would never join you on the platform. You cannot think how the people round me were noticing and commenting upon this conduct.”

“Do you know,” said Lady Anne, “that I cannot help thinking, that Miss Carrington knew of the return of Sir Eustace de Grey, and that is the reason why she at last consented to come. Did you not remark how agitated she was, when Lord —— announced that Sir Eustace would address the meeting—or perhaps she pretended to be so. I think this Geraldine Carrington is a perfect coquet, and her religious doubts, the greatest farce in the world. I suppose that Sir Eustace will now have his eyes opened,—not, as I said before, that he ever liked that style of woman !”

So saying, the pretty bride leaned back, inviting repose, and her example was soon followed by her

companions, who each slept or mused in a corner of the carriage, till they reached the Priory.

In the meantime, Geraldine and Miss Graham remained in their places, till Mr. Everard, attended, not by Lord Hervey, but by Major Tankerville, succeeded in finding them, and our heroine eagerly secured the arm of her old friend, not only for the positive pleasure of his kind protection, but also for the negative one of avoiding the conceited and tedious Major, who, she feared, might expect an invitation to the seat, which Lord Hervey had occupied in the carriage. And where then was the latter, that his usually prompt attendance had devolved upon another? Was it, that he had remained to converse with either of the Catholic speakers? Had he been convinced by any of the beautiful truths they had uttered? She dared scarcely admit such a hope, yet, she longed to find what effect had been produced on his mind. The little party could proceed but slowly down the stairs, and through the portico, with the rest of the crowd, and, as Major Tankerville followed with Katherine, uttering in audible tones every thing the most distasteful, Geraldine began to consider, whether civility really demanded of her so total a sacrifice of her comfort, as that of having him opposite to her during the sixteen miles of her drive back to Sedgemoor. She then reflected

on the Catholic belief in voluntary sufferings as acceptable before God, and at length feeling, that, with this belief, she could endure any thing, even the Major, she was just turning to offer him the vacant seat in her barouche, when, on the last of the steps leading down to the portico, she saw Lord Hervey waiting to hand her into the carriage, and found, from the few words which passed between the friends, that Major Tankerville was engaged to meet Mr. Shadowshake at a dinner given in the town. With lightened step Geraldine followed Katherine into the carriage, Lord Hervey and Mr. Everard took the opposite seats as before, and the door was already shut, when, for the first time, seeing Lord Hervey's countenance by the flaring gas lights, she exclaimed, with all the warmth of manner arising from her conviction of his mental suffering,—“ Oh you are ill, Lord Hervey ! you are indeed ! You have been over-fatigued. Stop !” cried she to the footman, “ stop the carriage !”

Lord Hervey did indeed look ill, and confessed that, before the close of the psalm, he had been obliged to leave the platform, and to repose in a less heated atmosphere than the one he had quitted. The people, who had collected round him, had pressed him to drink some restorative, and he was sufficiently strengthened, he said, to proceed—he would not detain his kind friends—the drive



could not but refresh him, both in body and mind, and at length the carriage drove off; not, however, before Geraldine had caught a glimpse of Sir Eustace de Grey, who, leaning against one of the pillars of the portico, with his cloak wrapped closely round him, had fixed his eyes intently upon the occupants of the carriage, and now, on meeting Geraldine's glance of recognition, bowed profoundly, and, as she thought, coldly; but before she could determine whether it really had been so, her attention was again attracted by the pale, sad countenance of Lord Hervey, as, closing his eyes, he permitted his harassed mind, and aching head, to repose in silence, which no one interrupted, and which was soon succeeded by a calm of thought and feeling, to which Geraldine's kindness of look and tone had chiefly contributed.

Their route did not exactly lie in the direction of the Manor Hall, but, on leaving the town, Geraldine distinctly traced the Abbey ruin, and almost uttered an exclamation of pleasure, as, from one of the renovated arch windows, a faint light assured her that it was inhabited. As she continued to watch that part of the ruin, which for nearly a mile remained visible, she pictured to herself the Catholic priest, Father Bernard, engaged in solitary prayer or study,—or perhaps hearing the confession of some penitent—or conversing with some chosen friend—perhaps with De Grey!

If so, how interesting would be the subjects discussed ! she envied each by turns. Miss Graham had also seen the light from the ruin, and, willing to recall her friend from the train of thought to which she guessed that sight had given rise, made some whispered remark to Geraldine, calculated to remind her of the companions beside her.

“Do not lower your voice on my account, Miss Graham,” said Lord Hervey, in a voice scarcely audible from weakness.

“I had hoped, my lord, that you were asleep,” said Katherine.

“Asleep !” replied he ; “Oh no—how *could* I sleep !”

These words struck on Geraldine’s already softened heart ; yet how could she yield to its dictates ? She did not believe that Lord Hervey’s illness had been caused by awakening doubts respecting the justice of his cause, but from anxiety, rendered almost desperate, on her account, when, after having induced her to be a listener to all that he fondly trusted would re-convert her, his hopes had been overthrown by the unexpected defence given by the two Catholics. Geraldine was right in her conjecture respecting the cause of Lord Hervey’s illness. He had, from the moment when De Grey advanced to the front of the platform, fixed his eyes on her, who was the chief, if not the only, object of his solicitude. He had marked the start

of joyful surprise with which she heard Lord —'s announcement—the emotion which succeeded, and the enthusiastic attention which she afterwards gave to the whole of De Grey's brilliant and effective address. Pang after pang had shot through Lord Hervey's heart, as he saw in De Grey a twofold rival, with whose talents his humility trembled to compete: and although assurances had been given him that no attachment, or even preference, had subsisted between De Grey and Miss Carrington, still it was impossible for Lord Hervey to believe that a state of indifference could long continue—and fearing, that greatly as the Catholic and himself differed on many other points, they must agree to love and admire the same woman, his Lordship, at the close of De Grey's speech, seemed resolved to remain on the platform, for no other purpose than to watch the speaking countenance of Geraldine. Throughout the calamitous and harrowing details of popish atrocity, brought forward by the reverend Mr. Shadowshake, that countenance had given him no encouragement, it looked by turns weary and contemptuous, till, on the opening of Mr. O'Niel's address, the flash of triumph in her eye, and the merry laugh which he saw, though he heard it not, told him that the time was passed when Catholic and Protestant could address her on equal ground. These convictions, as they were slowly admitted by Lord Hervey, would not have

so greatly discouraged him, had he known that the pain which Geraldine was inflicting was shared by herself, and that, in the silence which followed his mournful reply to Miss Graham, Geraldine had probed her heart sufficiently to find that it was there her danger lay. The excitement of the preceding hours had left her also fatigued and depressed, and her thoughts tinged with gloom. So much of mental conflict had been, and must still be, her's,—she was so keenly alive to the misrepresentation which her conduct and motives would meet from a hasty and censorious world, she shrank with such terror from the publicity which must soon be given to her opinions, that she clung more and more to the fond idea of being loved, and more truly appreciated the value of that disinterested attachment, which yet she must renounce: but must she indeed renounce it? Should Lord Hervey's religious convictions remain steadfast, was there nothing to be expected from his liberality? Would he, would his parents, ever consent to his marriage with a Catholic? If so, what would be her line of duty? She could not resolve:—but the flattering suggestion was not discarded, that the purity of her motives, in becoming a Catholic, would be far more evidenced were she to marry a Protestant, and the rumour hushed for ever, that, in the mighty change which her religious feelings had undergone, any part was to be attributed to De Grey.

The evening at Sedgemoor Priory was passed in comments *sotto voce* between those who had attended the meeting. Mr. Everard sate apart with Lady Winefride, rallying her on her supposed ignorance of her nephew's movements, and giving her an outline of both his and Mr. O'Niel's speech: while Miss Graham, as she partly listened to this, could not help occasionally overhearing also the whispered conversation of the group surrounding Lady Hungerford, and was amused to find how entirely the speakers on each side, were, by their own party, supposed to have won an easy victory. At some distance from the rest of the party, Colonel Torrington had challenged Geraldine to a game of chess, and Lord Hervey, who, though unable to attend the dinner table, had joined the party in the evening, rested on a sofa near them, ostensibly watching the game, which was conducted with such apparent deliberation and caution, that it remained yet undecided on the breaking up of the whist party, notwithstanding the discovery by Mr. Everard, that both kings were in check! Had Geraldine been aware how much Colonel Torrington had been initiated, during his drive home, into her supposed vacillation and coquetry, she would have been still more grateful for his giving her so excellent an excuse for silence. As it was, however, she guessed that he intended only kindness, and she guessed rightly. Colonel Torrington did not see the necessity of

believing all or any part of what had fallen from the lips of his wife and Lady Anne. Still there had been some assertions made, with such apparent simplicity of knowledge, that he could not but believe them partly true; and when he drew Geraldine aside to their quiet chess table, it was from the benevolent feeling, that, although she had received the Catholic faith for the sake of one admirer, and now was about to relinquish it for another, yet he should leave all severity to the ladies, it being more their vocation, and content himself with hoping, that all theological whims would be despatched previous to her union with his friend, Lord Hervey.

## CHAPTER VIII.

As the desiring nothing abroad, brings peace at home, so the relinquishing ourselves interiorly, joins us to God.

*Thomas à Kempis.*

THAT light, which Geraldine had silently observed in the abbey ruin, did in truth proceed from the dwelling of the priest, towards which Sir Eustace bent his steps, immediately on leaving the Town Hall. Having been, with Mr. Everard, chief architect in rendering the ruin habitable, he was at no loss to find the private entrance, and was ushered in with glee, by Joanna, the housekeeper, to the room in which Mr. Bernard awaited him.

“Welcome, Sir Eustace,” cried the latter, “you are the first to enter these old walls since my establishment here, and you ought to be the first!”

“Give me the fitting blessing,” replied De Grey, bending his head, while he held his pastor’s hand between both his own.

“Almighty God bless you, as I do,” replied the priest.

The fire blazed cheerfully, and served more than the candles to light up the little apartment,

round which De Grey turned with interest. "I have not been here," said he, "since the finishing of all this oak-work, and I hope you found niches enough, and shelves enough?"

"Three niches were all I wished, and I found them," replied Mr. Bernard: "one for our blessed Lady, and the other two for St. John the Evangelist and for St. Bernard, my two patrons. They stand well in the divisions of the book shelves; do they not?"

"They do: but where is the well-remembered crucifix?"

"There is one," replied Mr. Bernard, pointing to a small recess, which, with its slab, its one chair, and its cushion, betokened, with the presence of the crucifix, its appropriation as a confessional: "there is a beautiful one!"

"Ah! but not *the* one," said De Grey. "Where have you placed that exquisite work of Benvenuto Cellini?"

"It is not here," replied Mr. Bernard.

"Why not?" persisted De Grey.

Mr. Bernard only smiled. At that instant, the door was flung open, and Joanna, entering with quick step, soon placed the dinner in readiness on the table. She then reminded the good priest and his guest, that all was ready, and grace being said, the friends proceeded to do justice to Joanna's skill in meagre fare.



“The good Protestants of Elverton little expected to see any Catholics at their meeting, or they would not have been so unmerciful as to fix it on a Friday,” said the priest, smiling.

“Oh, I am scarcely at all fatigued,” returned De Grey. “There was no clamour, no strife: on the contrary, the most marked attention was given by the audience, and the occasional interruptions from the platform were made in the strictest adherence to good breeding.”

“A blessed change, indeed, in the spirit and temper of the town,” observed Mr. Bernard; “and whom did you see at this meeting?”

“I saw the future Lady Hervey!” said De Grey, crossing his arms, and leaning back in his chair.

“I do not know her,” quietly observed the priest.

“Yes, sir, you do know her, by her present name, and from the many proofs given you by Mr. Everard of her fine mind, and her unconquerable desire to know the truth. ‘Unconquerable,’ however, I dare no longer call it, since a coronet has proved the stumbling block!”

“Was Miss Carrington the only person present?” said the priest, smiling.

“No! there were crowds besides: but what could induce her to be there?”

“And why should she not?” continued Mr. Bernard. “You represent this meeting to have been perfectly decorous in every respect, and perhaps Miss Carrington might wish to hear the public speakers on both sides.”

“All that would have been perfectly excusable, and even praiseworthy,” said De Grey, “could it but have been the case: but I learned on the platform, that not a Catholic was expected. My request in behalf of Mr. O’Niel and myself, took them quite by surprise, a surprise that was quite equalled by my own, on perceiving Miss Carrington, who, it seems, conveyed a party thither. Lord Hervey, by the bye, arrived in her equipage, and returning in the same way; and she must, therefore, have deliberately consented to listen, during hours, to falsehood and invective, against what she knows to be the truth, for the sake of— Lord Hervey.”

“Well! well!” said the charitable Mr. Bernard, “we must suppose that her convictions are not so strong as you have imagined, or that she has obtained Lord Hervey’s consent to follow them, even though she become his wife; but now for the speeches.”

“Ah! Mr. Bernard, you do not know Geraldine Carrington.”

“I suppose not,” returned he, smiling: “but

let us forget that lady for awhile, and now speak to me of the meeting in general. What did you touch upon in your own speech?"

"Being but a layman," said De Grey, "my chief task was to correct the historical and chronological mistakes from the chair, mistakes which were listened to with the most complacent attention, notwithstanding the counter-evidence of Gibbon, Hume, and the rest of the Protestant, or rather infidel, historians. I also endeavoured to calm the outrageous pity expressed for us papists, as they nickname us, because we do not think it necessary that our children should study the Levitical ceremonial, and other parts of the Old Testament, which, in the outcry for the 'whole Bible,' it would seem were considered by them as essential to the formation of a young woman's Christian education. But enough of my own speech: you should have heard Mr. O'Niel, for I cannot attempt to report another man's eloquence."

"Endeavour to recall part of it," requested Mr. Bernard, aware that, when once fully entered into the subject, De Grey could pour forth a flood of eloquence, rarely to be surpassed, and this soon became the case, in giving the young Irishman's address, though it was in abridgement. "And these are the men," cried he, in conclusion, "who are denounced as blood-thirsty tyrants—as having neither the love of God, nor of man. What has

England done, that she should thus be given up to believe a lie?"

The friends sate by the fire for some time in silence, till, at length, Mr. Bernard enquired what was Sir Eustace's opinion of the increase of Catholicity in England?

"Within the last year," replied De Grey, "there has scarcely been a circle in which some instance has not occurred, to be deplored or ridiculed, of conversion to the ancient faith; and, in most of these cases, the first steps have been made in consequence either of the overstated reports of Protestants against us, (for he who proves too much, proves nothing) or, from the negative proof given of our stability and peace, by the endless vacillations of those who are not Catholics."

After discoursing for some time on these subjects, there was again a pause, and one the more strange, considering that, after an absence of several months, Eustace De Grey could again command the undivided attention of his venerated friend. Mr. Bernard made one or two observations, which were assented to in so absent a manner, that at length he became aware of this, and sate patiently waiting till the spell should be broken. At length De Grey roused himself, and enquired whether the particulars of Mr. Richmond's will had been made known to Mr. Bernard?

The latter replied, "No!" that he had merely

heard of the old gentleman's decease, and that Sir Eustace and his cousin, the Countess Angela De Grey, were his joint heirs.

"Then you have yet to hear the peculiarity of this will," said De Grey, "which is this: the bulk of the fortune is left to Angela for her life, should she continue single, and at her death is to come to me and my heirs. Should she marry, she forfeits half to me: but if I am to be the chosen man, she resigns the whole to me!"

"Pardon me," said Mr. Bernard, "but I do not quite comprehend."

De Grey repeated the conditions of the will, and Mr. Bernard then enquired whether Mr. Richmond had not arranged this extraordinary will under the influence of some feeling which required explanation?

"He gives us this explanation, in a rational manner enough, in the will itself," replied De Grey; "and I believe him to have been in the most complete possession of his faculties. He sets forth the consideration he has always had for me, as his male heir, and the superior affection he has always borne Angela, as the child of his favourite niece; and adds, that, while he has felt anxious to continue to Angela every comfort she has enjoyed beneath his roof, he would not indulge this acknowledged partiality to the exclusion of my claims on his fortune. Mr. Richmond had always main-

tained, that a wife should possess nothing independently of her husband; and perhaps the old gentleman, in his dread lest Angela should become the wife of another, instead of fulfilling the dearest wish of his heart, which was a union with me, has thought to bring in the generosity of her character as auxiliary to his scheme. Yet this complicated arrangement fails in its intention. Angela may wish to fill my impoverished coffers with old uncle Richmond's savings, but it is not in her dignified and delicate nature to call further on my gratitude; while I am equally embarrassed how to act towards her. Were I convinced of her sometimes suspected preference for me, the mere circumstance of lying under obligation to the woman who loved me, ought not to gall my pride perhaps: but I confess that I feel somewhat of a grudge to good old uncle Richmond, that he has not divided the property simply and unconditionally between us, or, better still, that he should have empowered me to be the bestower and minister of all her comforts."

"Those struggles of the natural heart, against receiving the benefits of our fellow-creatures, must be subdued," replied Mr. Bernard. "Doubtless, in most cases, it is more blessed to give, than to receive; but the blessing here intended, is one laid up in store for those who give in simplicity, in self-denial, expecting no present return; not for those who proudly scorn an humble position, and

only breathe freely on an eminence, amidst the incense of praise and gaze of dependants."

"Still it is the birth-right of man to be the benefactor, and not the obliged," said De Grey.

"If I thought so," replied Mr. Bernard, smiling, and holding out his hand to the friend who had indeed denied himself in many comforts, to give him a suitable home,—“if I thought so, I should not be here!”

De Grey seized the hand extended to him, and exclaimed, “I am still of my own opinion, my dear sir, for, in this respect, I am by far the happiest of the two.”

“But should you be happy,” continued Mr. Bernard, “if, in return for all you have done for me, I were to shrink from you in all that morbid delicacy and self-love, which is miscalled ‘proper pride’? If I were to upbraid my Maker for not having given me a dignified competency, placing me out of the reach of humiliating benefits? Remember, that, with the whole range of his own created beings spread before him, *He* chose to be the reputed son of an humble artisan,—that, while his followers left all to follow him, *He* bestowed no earthly favours on them. We hear of his accepting the hospitalities of Lazarus and Martha, but we hear of no addition to their household comforts, from the gratitude of him who could command the riches of heaven and earth. *He*

submitted that women should minister unto him, whose reward was not found here below, and in every thing, even to being the guest and the dependant, He ‘humbled himself.’ Believe me, Sir Eustace, that it is far more easy to acknowledge Jesus Christ to be Lord and God, than to follow him in his *preference* for humiliations and privations.”

“Most true,” replied De Grey, with a sigh, “and to the humble in heart is given further grace, enabling them to receive all those hard sayings, which lead on to perfection. I sometimes wonder that you have never entered into a religious order, and added the merit of obedience and poverty to your other crucifixions of the flesh !”

“I am more adapted by my all-wise Maker for the pastoral charge,” replied the priest, “and therefore it is my duty to remain in the post assigned me, striving, though in the world, not to be of it, and to possess my little property as though I possessed it not, denying myself in all things not essential to life, and parting from every thing, however innocent, or even sacred, which might ensnare me into making idols.”

“Mr. Bernard,” cried De Grey impetuously, “you shall never disengage yourself from your attachment to me, or any other of your penitents. Keep your heart wide open, sir, and let the full tide of brotherly love gush forth. In truth, there



is not too much of that feeling abroad, and, in the state of politics and religion in this country, where every second man you meet is ready to knock you down, for the sake of his party, or his creed, for God's sake, let Catholics, at all events, love each other ; and let him, especially, who bears the name of John Bernard, cultivate and show forth the virtues of the beloved disciple !”

“ Do not misunderstand me,” replied Mr. Bernard. “ I aim at nothing beyond what that highly favoured disciple offers to me, in his meek, and pure, and lovely example. You well remember his injunctions, so often repeated, and so strongly enforced, that the flock should love one another; still more should the shepherds of that flock feel and observe this. But tell me, what inspired him with that tender charity? Was it not that he had lain on that sacred bosom, and drank at the source of divine and fraternal love? Could St. John ever forget, amidst his Jewish or Gentile converts, however interesting or engaging they might be, that he had spoken with the Lord of Glory?—that, heart to heart, he had been united to his God? Could he love them, but in Him, and for Him? Never! never!”

Mr. Bernard devoutly crossed himself, De Grey did the same. During the solemn pause which followed, the distant sounds of the Town Hall clock were heard to strike eight; and the little

echoing chimes of Joanna's clock told the same hour of night prayers in the abbey. The friends arose, and, by a door into the sacristy, joined the old housekeeper and the little boy who served as acolyte, and all passed into the chapel. During the usual Catholic service, at that tranquil hour, De Grey's over-excited feelings became subdued; the intense yearnings he had previously felt after earthly happiness ; the uncertainty of his position, and of his own feelings respecting the Countess Angela ; the bright vision, which, in Geraldine Carrington, as a convert to the Church, had floated before his imagination ; all ceased to agitate him, as, kneeling before the sanctuary, the things of time were viewed in their real light, and the eye of faith perceived that there was nothing 'fair,' or 'bright,' or 'true,' but heaven !

## CHAPTER IX.

He who's convinced against his will,  
Is of the same opinion still.

*Hudibras.*

DURING a walk, on the following morning, to watch the village skaiters on the sheet of water on Sedgemoor Common, the party from the Priory fell into several unprecedented tête-à-têtes. Amongst these were, Lady Hungerford with Mr. Everard, Lord Hervey with Miss Graham, the young German Baron with Lady Winefride, and Geraldine with . . . Major Tankerville !—the Scotney and Torrington couples keeping together, and indulging in their usual comments and conjectures, respecting the matrimonial and theological intentions of the rest. That these several conferences were the result of some preconcerted plan, appeared evident to each of those who were thus sought, and to none more than Mr. Everard, who, though frequently consulted by Lady Hungerford, had never before been invited so decidedly to walk with her out of listening distance; and his acuteness instantly detected in the formal

manner of her opening attack upon him, that she had learned it by heart, either from her son, or from Major Tankerville. This persuasion induced him to remain perfectly silent, that her ladyship might not be flurried out of any part of the charges she had against him, which, in fact, made up a pretty long list ; but to which, after a decent pause, to be assured that he had heard the last, the old gentleman only replied by his usual, " Well ! "

" Well ! Mr. Everard," said her ladyship, much encouraged by the correctness with which she had remembered all his delinquencies, and the patience with which he had heard them,—“ Well, sir ! I can only repeat my surprise, that you, who have hitherto proved such a friend both to General Carrington's family and to our's, should now have been so instrumental in bringing such an affliction upon both houses, as the loss of this dear girl.”

" My good lady," replied Mr. Everard, " you might just as reasonably upbraid an oculist because he has removed a film from the eyes of one, who, for *family reasons*, had better have been kept blind ! Not that I can take any credit to myself for having cleared Miss Carrington's vision. Had I been unwilling, she would have found some other to do her bidding.”

" Nay," replied Lady Hungerford, " if you had resolved that Miss Carrington should believe all

this Roman Catholic faith, it would have been far better that you should have remained her only instructor, than to have engaged this handsome and talented young Catholic as your aid-de-camp."

"Lady Hungerford," returned Mr. Everard, "remember, that it was at your own house, two years ago, that Geraldine Carrington first met Eustace De Grey. Some renewal of the acquaintance was, I believe, made during the following season in London, and once only since then, and that by chance, at the abbey ruin near Elverton."

"Ah! Mr. Everard," sighed her ladyship, indeed you have not considered the danger of working upon the romantic and poetical turn of our dear young friend, by these scenes and associations of mind!"

"And so, my lady," said the old gentleman, stopping abruptly, and dropping his arms, "you suppose Miss Carrington fool enough, to believe in seven sacraments, and Transubstantiation, because I have put some painted glass into an arched window?"

Lady Hungerford not having received any directions what to say in reply to any defence from Mr. Everard, his sallies in general defying calculation, now looked a little at the skaiters, and then at Geraldine and Major Tankerville, who were deeply engaged, as it appeared, in combating each other's opinions. She felt some hopes revive

from the see-saw motion of the Major's arm, which she thought betokened argument or eloquence, and again leaned on Mr. Everard, to join the rest of the party. Miss Graham and Lord Hervey having apparently finished their appointed task, were now standing on the ice close to the group of skaters, till the fears and remonstrances of Lady Hungerford engaged them to return to safer footing. A graceful figure dance then began between four of the village youths, from which Major Tankerville turning, as from an ungodly sight, Geraldine found herself at length standing in peace, to enjoy one of the few rural amusements left to England, no longer 'merry England,' sectarian gloom having spread over its village greens, and round its blazing hearths, stopping the dance, the song, the festive games, of olden times. It was on the opposite side of the water that Geraldine and Major Tankerville had parted, and after some time watching the evolutions of the skaters, her attention was drawn to the position in which she stood with respect to the rest of the party; a relative position, which was in perfect keeping with her approaching declaration of the faith she inwardly cherished. Between herself, and her still kind, though anxious, friends, lay deep waters, only to be passed by means of a brittle surface, which seemed to her no inapt representation of the forbearance and charity of the controversial world

towards a convert to the ancient Church. She now looked earnestly at the group, from which she had thus accidentally been separated, and her heart sank, as she rapidly threw a prospective glance on her intercourse, as a convert to Catholicity, with these her protesting friends. So deeply were her thoughts engaged on this difficult subject, that she perceived not that the rustic feats were over, nor observed the various signs made to her by her own party, not to cross the ice, which they feared she might attempt, but to join them at the head of the water; and it was not until the returning footsteps of Major Tankerville on the frosty ground caught her ear, that she remembered his existence, and with it the probability that his dull ignorance was to be a second time inflicted upon her. To escape was now her sole aim, and, hastily taking the path which led to the rest of the party, she was soon within greeting distance of Miss Graham, who was advancing to meet her, accompanied by Lord Hervey. The latter, whose spirits seemed revived, gave an arm to each lady, and the whole party turned towards the Priory.

“Did you ever converse with Major Tankerville before?” enquired Lord Hervey of Geraldine, anxious to discover what effect the exhortations of his friend had produced on her mind.

“Never,” she replied; “nor can I say that Major Tankerville has ‘conversed’ to day. I do

not think that term could apply to his communications with any one."

"Why not, Miss Carrington? Give me your definition of Tankerville's speech, or talk, or what I am to call it?"

"I have heard," continued Geraldine, "of some orators in Parliament, who can make a grand opening speech, but who can never reply. This is the case with Major Tankerville. He cannot reply, and therefore he cannot converse. He starts well enough, and you are forced to listen with respect, because he repeats so much of the sacred Word of God: but when, in your turn, you object that such and such texts cannot be applied where he would apply them, because of such and such reasons, he cannot combat those reasons. I often wondered, during our walk, that he could not bring forward something in answer to my objections. I almost longed to help him. His only resource was to repeat these same misapplied texts in a louder tone, which, as I told him, left the point in debate exactly where it was before; and I believe, that never was man in greater rage with woman, than Major Tankerville with me."

"Oh! he is only zealous," pleaded Lord Herve; "you must pardon him. And may I ask what were the particular points on which he dwelt?"



“ Why, that is exactly what I wished your good friend to confine himself to,” replied Geraldine; and I find it more difficult to remember what each one said, than I have found it to recollect whole evenings of discourse with my uncle, Dr. Sinclair. But I will do my best, and endeavour to render our conversation as methodical and consecutive as it was in reality the reverse. To begin then:— The Major’s first charge against the Catholics was, that they preferred the human authority of the Fathers to the divine authority of the Bible. Then followed a torrent of invective. As soon as I was permitted to reply, I said, that I was quite accustomed to hear that charge, and that nothing could be more false. That I supposed it to originate from discovering how little the ancient theological writers agreed with the modern Protestants, that the latter, being forced to resign them, accused the Catholics of being guided by them, rather than by the Bible; but that the question was really this: the Bible stands unrivalled and alone; but which body of men are to be trusted for its explanation, the ancient, or the modern, Christians? those who had listened to the Apostles and their immediate successors, or those who in these days taught in direct opposition to them? I did not attempt to argue with Major Tankerville, as I should have done, had he found it convenient to remember the authority given by Christ to His Church, to de-

cide in matters of faith: for I believe he shuts his eyes, or calls it a misprint, whenever he comes to any strong text of that nature. I made battle with him entirely on his own ground, and it was that which at last made him so angry. In reply to his assertion, that the Bible was to be our sole guide, for that the spirit accompanied the sincere reader, I told him that my private study of the Bible had determined me to be a Catholic! He spoke against human authority, and I agreed with him, and objected to any one's presuming to interfere between God and my soul, and inquired, how it was that he could venture to speak to me, when I had a Bible? In fact, I claimed every privilege, equally with himself, of choosing or rejecting exactly what appeared to my own judgment wise and good. I said that, if I found more wisdom in the early councils, than in the modern religious societies, I had every right to my preference; that, if the Fathers of the early Church were but men, what were there their successors? What were the Fathers of the English Church and those of the Kirk of Scotland—the framers of the Thirty-nine Articles, or of the Assembly's Catechism? Major Tankerville did not attempt to defend these authorities: he considered them to be only 'partially enlightened;'—therefore, I proceeded to his own particular set of highly illuminated Christians—the chairmen and committees of the Bible Society, Tract

Society, Reformation Society, &c., and enquired upon what grounds I was to yield my private judgment to them? Were they more than uninspired men? Most assuredly and avowedly not. Then, why were these men to interpret, and dictate, and dogmatize to *me*, a Bible reader, when they own, nay even boast, that the Holy Ghost has *not* overruled their decisions? Here Major Tankerville caught a view of the village skaiters, and not having an answer to give, he fled from them, and from me : and now, Lord Hervey, that I have attended the Reformation Meeting, to please your mother, and have taken a walk with Major Tankerville, to please yourself, I trust that no more is expected of me !”

“Oh do not say this,” replied Lord Hervey, earnestly. “You have a prepossession against poor Tankerville, and therefore nothing comes acceptable from him ; but if you could be induced to have a conference with some other pious Christian friend, some faithful gospel minister—for instance, Mr. Shadowshake.”

“Mr. Shadowshake !” cried Geraldine, laughing. “Now confess that good purblind Mr. Shadowshake’s testimony amounted to this—that, in the Roman Catholic Church, there have been, and still are, ambitious prelates, artful Jesuits, and immoral confessors ;—what advantage could accrue from my listening to endless anecdotes, true or

false, on these topics? I do not leave the Church of England because of her former race of hunting, drinking, swearing parsons! neither do I conceive it would have been the duty of a pious and enlightened Israelite, during the latter years of Eli, to have renounced the faith of his forefathers, because a Hophni and Phineas, by their disgusting rapacity and licentiousness, drew a glaring scandal on the temple of their God, to so great a degree that it was said, ‘Men abhorred the offering of the Lord!’ This mistaken conduct of renouncing the dogmas of a Church, on account of the mal-practices of its members, is exactly that for which I blame Luther and the rest of the Reformers. Had God intended that moral rectitude should be *invariably* bound up in the priestly office, to what purpose is the following text, from the divine lips of Christ himself,—‘The scribes and pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. All, *therefore*, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do: but *do not you after their works, for they say and do not.*’ ”

“I do not remember that text,” said Lord Hervey.

“I can quite believe that you do not,” replied Geraldine; “for I have been perfectly astonished at the way in which, as a Protestant, and piquing myself on my knowledge and impartiality, I have dwelt on some texts, to the total exclusion of

others, and this must be, in fact, the secret of all sectarianism. With respect to the stumbling block, so often cast in the way of the weak believer, by the infirmities of those placed over him in high and sacred office, we might reflect, that, amongst the twelve chosen Apostles, those who were the most favoured and distinguished, were those who the most transgressed. One doubted, another denied, a third betrayed his Lord, and two more gave way to a spirit of resentment and revenge, and all strove who should be greatest !”

“I never considered the subject in this light before,” said Lord Hervey.

“Take care, my Lord,” whispered Katherine, “that Miss Carrington does not convert you, while you are endeavouring to do the same kind office by her !”

This was said in a playful tone, but it was a warning truly meant—Miss Graham’s discrimination having led her to perceive, that Geraldine was more than a match for her noble admirer in power of mind, grasp of thought, and stock of information. That Geraldine appeared not to have fully discovered her advantages, was to be accounted for solely by that dimness of vision which a growing affection ever produces ; and Miss Graham trembled lest Lord Hervey’s conversion to the faith of his ladylove, should be the result of these repeated conversations. Why this kind

hearted and devoted friend should have dreaded a turn in Geraldine's affairs, which would have smoothed all difficulties, would also appear most strange ; but all was to be accounted for by that terror and aversion to the Roman Catholic Church, which seemed inaccessible to argument or feeling. She now rejoiced that the walk was ended, and that Lord Hervey, instead of entering the house with them, turned back to join his friend, Major Tankerville, and pace with him up and down one of the sheltered walks in the shrubbery.

"Come ! my dear Kate," cried Geraldine, playfully, when the friends were again alone in the privacy of their rooms, "it is now your turn to report the subject of your *tête-à-tête* this morning. Pray, what did you say to our zealous friend, and what did he say to you ?"

"I indulged in much fewer impertinences than, by your own account, you appear to have indulged in to poor Major Tankerville. I fear that you will make that man your enemy !"

"And I fear you will make Lord Hervey too much your friend," returned Geraldine. "I am rather jealous of your private consultations together."

"I am glad to hear this," said Katherine, smiling ; "but the feeling is wasted—all our talk was of you."

“And what of me? The old story of popish bewitchments?”

“Yes! Lord Hervey is very anxious that you should have an interview with some pious and talented Evangelical minister, who could bring you back to the pure faith you are deserting. Some one who has experience in controversy, and could expose the fallacy of those opinions you now adopt.”

“And did you tell him,” said Geraldine, “that I have listened to High Church, Low Church; No Church! till I can hear nothing that is not only threadbare, but torn to rags?”

“Lord Hervey is no more satisfied than myself,” replied Katherine, “with the views of those who have hitherto been your instructors, and then your opposers, in controversy. You might as well have listened to the Pope himself against popery, as have taken that inflated High Church Warden for the guardian of your protestantism!”

“Still you allow, Katherine, that my uncle is a perfect specimen of the old fashioned High Church of England, and that in him, and from him, I have seen and heard enough to satisfy me respecting that party amongst Protestants?”

“Yes, I allow so far,” said Miss Graham. “At the outset of your battle with him, you called yourself ‘the little David, with but sling and stone.’ I thought of this afterwards, when, by merely push-

ing his own principles to their extent, you vanquished him, and, to carry on the metaphor, Goliath fell under the weight of his heavy armour, and was beheaded by his own sword."

"So much for High Church defeat, or suicide," cried Geraldine; "and will you not allow that I have had specimen sufficient in the Low Church marches, and counter-marches, and mutinies, to see that the Church militant must have a general, with subordinate officers, to 'fight the good fight' with any success? Just conceive, in a great pitched battle with formidable adversaries, that each soldier abided by his own private tactics, pursuing them, even through the bodies of his equally perverse companions in arms! what but carnage and disgrace could be the issue of this private judgment? And yet this is exactly the view to be now taken of the Low Church party, against the invisible but desperate enemies, led on by the 'Prince of this world!'"

"Do not suppose," replied Miss Graham, "that because I cannot always oppose you in metaphor, I am necessarily won over to the point to which I see you would lead me. I cannot cope with you at all times, not being so versed as yourself in this particular line of controversy, which, I cannot but think, you have taken up from the want of other mental aliment. You are fond of grappling with difficulties, Geraldine; and this excitement



of mind is become necessary to you ; but I foresee that, when once in the Roman Catholic Church, and by degrees accustomed to, and satiated by, all the wonders and mysteries of that mighty pile of accumulated belief, you will then sigh after more, than even that abundant storehouse can bestow !”

“ You are right, Katherine ! I shall still, I trust, sigh after that full, perfect, all-satisfying Church, to be found only in heaven. Yet, in that militant part of the Universal Church, of which I am in heart a member, struggling and imperfect though it be, I enter the bright vista leading to the eternal portals, I mount the first step of the Patriarch’s ladder. That perfect communion between the glorified and militant Church throws a halo round the latter, full of inspiration. It beckons onward !”

“ Almost all the party here, Geraldine, are persuaded that you are led into the Romish Church entirely by your imagination.”

“ Let one of them conquer me in stiff and sober argument, before they repeat this absurd charge,” cried Geraldine ; “ or let them, in penance for it, wade through all the tomes I have done, making notes, comparing one author with another, and searching for truth, with infinitely more trouble and labour, than if I had merely jumped after it to the bottom of a well.”

“ Again a metaphor,” said Katherine, smiling.

“Well then,” continued Geraldine, “do you not see, Kate, that, if I possess this imagination, this love of excitement, this perception of the vast, the beautiful, the harmonious, no other religion than the Roman Catholic can possibly satisfy me. In fact, my friends here are so far right, that my imagination, together with every power of my mind, and every faculty of my soul, leads me there. But these friends, and almost every one in this cold calculating age, speak of imagination, as though it were a crime, never reflecting that, if God be not the author of evil, He cannot bestow evil gifts upon His children. It is man who perverts and misuses every heavenly gift; and how? By expending it upon the things of earth. But am I doing this? It is in vain for my friends to indulge the hope, that this, to them, alarming faculty of mine can be crushed and annihilated. I can no more still the aspirations of the imagination, than I can those of the mind and soul, of which I deem it the offspring. Possessing, then, a gift which cannot be destroyed, and which, if not used, will be abused—how is it to be employed?”

“Certainly, in the service of God,” replied Katherine; “but even then not with extravagance; for St. Paul says, ‘Let your moderation be known unto all men.’”

“Or,” rejoined Geraldine, “as the Catholic version has it, ‘Let your modesty be known unto

all men,' which version I prefer. But do not expect me any longer to argue by opposition of texts on any subject. Three hundred years have proved its inefficacy in settling disputes amongst Protestants, and I consider it as a desecration of the sacred word of God. The sense of the Bible is gathered from the 'grand whole, not from detached parts; and the entire weight of Scripture goes to prove that we are to offer up our whole being to our God."

"I know, and trust I observe, that truth," replied Katherine; "but remember, that God, who gave you an exalted imagination, gave you also judgment and common sense, of which fully as strict an account will be demanded, as of the other more brilliant quality."

"Granted! my dear friend; and this is the account I can give of my judgment and common sense, which two qualities are exclusively canonized and worshipped in this our nineteenth century. When I began to reflect that my title of 'Protestant' was a negative one, and referred to something positive, and precursive, I immediately made myself acquainted with that, against which I had been all my life protesting: now, that showed some judgment! And when, on the investigation of this original Church, finding nothing to protest against, I protested no longer—surely this was common sense, in its most palpable form!"

Katherine smiled, and sighed. "Then I may tell Lord Hervey that you have irrevocably made up your mind."

"You may," replied Geraldine; but the animation of her countenance passed away, as she said this, and she also sighed.

## CHAPTER X.

Sweet is the smile of home, the mutual look,  
When hearts are of each other sure ;  
Sweet all the joys that crowd the household nook,  
The haunt of all affections pure.  
Yet in the world e'en these abide, and we  
Above the world our calling boast.  
Till then who rest presume—  
Who turn to look are lost.

*Keeble.*

ON entering the drawing-room before dinner, Lord Hervey again sought Miss Graham, and enquired in a low voice the success of her conference with Miss Carrington.

“I can report no success whatever,” she replied; “and I rather think it will be the better policy to abandon the subject of controversy for the present. Geraldine is armed at all points, and, so far from disliking an opportunity of making us all wiser, as she thinks, she readily brings all the powers of her mind, and all the graces of her playful fancy, to make ‘the worse appear the better reason.’ ”

“Then you think the case hopeless, Miss Gra-

ham," said Lord Hervey, in so desponding an air, and leaning so confidentially over Katherine's chair, that several of the party observed him with surprise, and watched Miss Graham's countenance, to discover whether a melodrama of rival friends was about to be enacted.

"I think the case hopeless, as far as argument is concerned," said Katherine; "and I do not think it would be right to work upon her feelings. I have never attempted it, and the trial, if successful, could not be lasting. Miss Carrington would never consent to lose her own esteem."

"Then what is your resource, Miss Graham—what can be said, what can be done, to rescue one so dear to us—to you, I mean, especially?"

"I should advise," replied Katherine, "that Miss Carrington's Protestant friends now preserve total silence, that opposition may no longer feed the energy and resistance of her character. Let her, on the contrary, see all the wood and wire of the fabric which she now so much admires. I would fain believe 'tis distance lends enchantment to the view,' and that a near approach will break the spell."

"A near approach!" repeated Lord Hervey doubtfully, for the image of De Grey crossed his mental vision; "do you think that would be wise in Miss Carrington's present state of mind?"

"Why, my Lord," continued Miss Graham,

we have seen the little effect of any warnings or reasonings, while the priestly power, and all its train of tyrannical absurdities, continue but a speculation, a theory. But let our high-minded and independent friend begin to feel one link of the popish chain, and she will rebel."

"I like your plan better than Tankerville's; and yet there is much hazard in it," said Lord Hervey.

"What does Major Tankerville advise?"

"He advises much sterner methods, than any of Miss Carrington's friends would be inclined to adopt; and I grieve to say, that a mutual misunderstanding of each other's characters has only been increased by my ill-timed request, that they should engage in argument. He thinks this lovely and endearing creature is completely a spoiled child, and intoxicated by the homage rendered to her talents, and that bewitching—I know not what to call it—daringness or originality of mind, which surely is the best test, after all, that the heart is all candour and simplicity. What think you, Miss Graham?"

"I think," replied Katherine, "that my dear Geraldine's character is like the limpid stream, which flows over the rich ore, its very clearness and graceful ripple being in itself so attractive, that you scarcely remember the golden stores beneath."

“Beautiful!” cried Lord Hervey: “how refreshing it is to hear one woman sincerely praise another!”—and so approvingly did his Lordship now look on Katherine, that Geraldine, who, while she talked with Lady Hungerford, was watching the two apart, caught that peculiar expression which had hitherto been directed to herself alone, and a momentary pang shot through her heart. All now moved, at the summons to dinner, and as Lord Hervey was roused to lead in, as usual, the Lady Anne Scotney, while Miss Graham took the arm of Major Tankerville, another look of intelligence passed, which was equally observed by Geraldine: but this time she felt no pang at the possibility of Lord Hervey’s attaching himself to the woman, who, of all others, was, perhaps, the best suited to him. There even came a sensation of relief, that the responsibility of making Lord Hervey miserable was not to be added to her other trials. That Katherine had not a thought of self in conversing with his lordship, Geraldine was as perfectly persuaded, as if she had heard every word that had passed, and, with her usual ardour, she now longed to impart her ideas, and wishes, to her faithful and unconscious friend, who, from the other side of the table, turned her clear confiding eyes on her the more fondly, because her neighbour, Major Tankerville, was imparting to her in a growl, which



he intended for a whisper, that no greater sign of reprobation could be given, than Miss Carrington's rejection of gospel truth, as imparted by his lips that morning.

During the rest of the evening, Geraldine's thoughts were wholly turned to the communication she desired to have with her friend, and, after the party broke up, her impatience suffered a long trial from the seemingly unusual duration of her maid's attendance, as well as the continued discussion which went on in the adjoining room, between Miss Graham and Phoebe, respecting the speakers at the late meeting in Elverton. At length the tirewomen withdrew, and Miss Graham, throwing open the door of communication, came to bid her friend "Good night."

"Oh, Kate, do not say 'good night' yet awhile, but rest in this easy chair, and let me talk to you for half an hour."

"No, indeed, Geraldine, we have both talked enough, and more than enough, for one day. You looked pale at dinner, and Lord Hungerford, who was the first to remark it, said he was sure you kept late hours. I must plead likewise for myself, for I am very sleepy."

"But, Katherine, I have something really of consequence to say to you; nothing of controversy, but yet something which concerns us both. There! sit down, and I will tell you all about it."

Miss Graham accordingly leaned back in the cushioned chair, while Geraldine stood a little apart, preparing to open her mind; when, after some little hesitation and delay, she perceived, on approaching her friend, that her comfortable position had invited her into so peaceful a nap, that, struck with the contrast to her own wakeful and energetic thoughts, Geraldine gave way to her keen sense of the ludicrous, in a merry peal of laughter, which awoke Katherine, and excited sufficient astonishment to fix her attention.

"I beg your pardon, dear Kate," cried Geraldine, "I did feel very serious, quite in keeping with the subject I had to propose; but now, perhaps, after all, it would be as well for us both to go to bed."

"No," said Miss Graham, smiling, "now that you have begun in so wise a manner to disburthen your mind, I am ready to hear the sprightly remainder."

"Well then, my beloved Katherine!" cried Geraldine, throwing herself on her knees and taking both the hands of her friend. "I have discovered to-day, that had Lord Hervey not been already prepossessed in my favour, had he met us both together for the first time, you, Katherine, *you* would have been his choice."

"'Tis true I went to sleep, but then I awoke again," said Miss Graham. "Now you, GERAL-

dine, are still dreaming ! No wonder that such absurdities should make you laugh."

"But I did not laugh at the fact I have mentioned, though it makes me so happy. It was your composed nap that so much amused me," replied Geraldine.

"I was by far more sensibly employed than yourself," said Katherine, "by resting myself, while you were vainly endeavouring to place this unmanageable subject in a fair light to me. Did I not tell you this morning that you loved to grapple with difficulties? now here is a delightful impossibility for you !"

"Not at all impossible, or even difficult," persisted Geraldine. "Lord Hervey will soon weary of the hopeless task of reconverting me. I am but a passing fancy. There can be nothing deep in his regard for me, the principal bond of union being wanting, which is religious sympathy. I know well that Lady Hungerford declares her son to have loved me from a child, but, considering that he has married in the interval of his devotion, I do not feel myself obliged to be more grateful than the case requires."

"You know, very well," replied Miss Graham, "that Lord Hervey was deterred from avowing his sentiments towards you, four years ago, from witnessing the preference you showed for Don Carlos Duago. Lord Hervey then left the neigh-

bourhood, and very shortly afterwards—too shortly not to betray his disappointment—he married Miss Emily Tankerville. How could he, then, do otherwise than forget you? Would it not also have been an insult to her gentle and pious memory to have admitted a thought but of her, during the first year of widowhood? Yes! Lord Hervey has acted throughout with all the feeling and propriety to be expected from him,—his only fault being that want of self-confidence, which prevented his remaining to compete with, and overcome, his foreign rival.”

“Perhaps,” said Geraldine, “I might have become the wife of Lord Hervey four years ago, had not my fancy been gained by another, from whom obedience obliged me to part: but I can now see that it was so ordained, that I might at this time be left unshackled, to follow the dictates of my conscience. Therefore, do not fear, on my account, to love Lord Hervey, if you should find it possible. His destinies are not linked with mine; and while you probably look on this assertion as a flight of the imagination, I feel it to be a truth.”

“Dearest Geraldine,” said Katherine, rising, “I cannot in conscience suffer you to break through your hours of rest in this manner. Your days are now full of conflict and danger; let your nights at least be calm:” and breaking from her

friend, she entered her own room, leaving Geraldine still on her knees, and now absorbed in devotion.

The following day was Sunday, and an early breakfast was attended by those who deemed it their duty to go to the morning service at the parish church. Major Tankerville, having ascertained that the rector of Sedgemoor held very erroneous views, mentioned his intention of going to the Baptists' meeting house, where a very godly man led the congregation, and Lord Hervey seemed rather inclined to follow his example. However, on starting for a walk across the park, according to a previous engagement with Colonel Torrington, Geraldine and Katherine found that Lord Hervey and his father were waiting to join them. Lord Hungerford gave his arm to Geraldine, while his son walked by her on the other side, and Miss Graham followed with Colonel Torrington.

"Where the deuce is Everard?" cried Lord Hungerford.

"Gone with Lady Winefride to the popish mass at Burnleigh," replied Lord Hervey. "What account does that old man think of giving, at the last awful day, of this tampering with danger, this public sanction, of what in his heart he disbelieves, and ought to abhor?"

"Better leave Everard and his conscience to

his God," replied the Earl; "how do you know that he disbelieves what you abhor?"

"Because he confesses that he would give half his learning, and half his wealth, to believe what the Catholics believe, but that he cannot. He, therefore, does not think their faith, in all its parts, necessary to salvation, and it must be this restless desire of conformity to their Church, without the capability of believing all she teaches, which leads him to form those extravagant schemes, which have made him the laughing-stock of all parties."

"Everard's is but the usual fate of religious peace-makers," replied Lord Hungerford:—"not that I mean to defend all his schemes,—for instance, he not only would have all Christian communities to frequent indiscriminately each other's places of worship, but would have them intermarry, for the sole purpose of compelling toleration and forbearance. Now this presents many difficulties;". . . and the old lord fell into a pondering fit, in which he was joined by his companions, not without some embarrassment of feeling; Lord Hervey was the first to break through this silence, by introducing some pious subject of less personal application, which lasted till they reached the village church of Sedgemoor.

The prayers were devoutly read, and the sermon, to avoid which Major Tankerville had gone to the meeting house, contained nothing certainly

to amuse the intellect, no discoveries of hidden meaning in simple texts, no high doctrine, but an earnest practical exhortation to the flock on 'forgiveness of injuries,' grounded on the pure motive of conformity to Christ our example, and as done unto him, and for him. From the rector's mode of appeal to his hearers, Geraldine concluded that dissensions in the parish had given rise to his choice of subject, and felt that it must sink deep into the hearts of those personally interested.

On their return home, by the same rural footpath, the sermon, as usual, was the subject of discussion. Lord Hervey lamented that the preacher had imbibed "Baxter's low views;" Lord Hungerford anathematised that "confounded spirit of criticism," which had taken possession of most church-goers; Miss Graham thought the sermon obvious and dull; and Colonel Torrington confessed that he had dreamed of forgiving the rector for something or other, and only woke at the general stir. Lady Hungerford and Mrs. Torrington drove to church in the afternoon, and this little diversity in the monotony of the day, together with some letter-writing, helped on the tedious hours till dinner, before which time Lady Winefride Blount and Mr. Everard returned, and the conversation became animated on the question of using horses, and employing the coachmen on Sundays,—a question which has been so often

discussed, that we will not record the many wise things said by the party at Sedgemoor Priory, respecting the Jewish and the Christian Sabbath ; mercy to animals ; the superiority of man's soul to the brute creation, &c. ; merely noticing a fresh plan from Mr. Everard, that horses should rest on Saturday, the seventh day, it being that originally given for their repose.

In the evening, Lord Hervey, who could not follow Miss Graham's advice, to cease from controversy with her friend, asked Geraldine what were the texts to which she alluded, when she said that "Protestants, with the whole Bible before them, dwelt on some texts, to the total exclusion of others ?"

"I have so long a list against you," said Geraldine, smiling, "that, if I once begin, there will be no time for the sacred music I have promised you."

"Then will you come to my mother's room, after breakfast to-morrow morning ? We shall find only herself, unless you will permit me to bring Tankerville."

"Surely," said Geraldine, with some embarrassment, "it belongs to Lady Hungerford alone to decide whom to admit to her private sitting-room : but, if I might hope for a calm and friendly discussion, it should be rather with yourself and Miss Graham, than with Major Tankerville."



“Then be it so,” said his lordship, rising from his seat by Geraldine. “And now may I bring the harp near the fire, that you may not suffer, while you give us delight?”

Geraldine, however, preferred going to the instrument, and sang to it during the next hour, neither voice nor memory failing her. Those of the party who could keep awake, felt and expressed themselves much indebted to the relief which the music gave to the monotony of the Sunday evening; and the dozers, who formed the majority, started up occasionally to utter their encomiums. At length, on Geraldine’s putting aside the harp, to escape quietly to her room, Lord Hervey, after expressing the feelings which her exquisite voice, and devotional expression, had awakened in him, informed her, in a whisper, that his mother, and one or two of their guests, had consented to accompany himself and Major Tankerville to another room, where they intended to read and expound a chapter before prayer.

“I am quite ready to be one of the party,” said Geraldine; “but why all this secrecy?”

“My father desired,” replied Lord Hervey, “that, if we insisted on turning preachers, it should be without attracting his notice. In fact he disapproves of any one’s explaining the Word of God but the clergy, and would have refused our

request, but from his wish to have his guests happy in their own way."

In the mean time, Major Tankerville, with that want of tact, for which he was so distinguished, had roused the sleeping earl to an immediate sense of what he had conditionally granted, and, not satisfied with toleration, was endeavouring, in the phraseology which Lord Hungerford loathed, to persuade him to attend the exposition about to be given. Lord Hervey looked alarmed, and, after several ineffectual attempts to gain his friend's attention, called to him by his name. Major Tankerville now saw his mistake, and merely lingered to say,—“I am sure that I feel persuaded that of myself I can do no one good thing!” to which Lord Hungerford replied drily, “Never thought you could, Major!” and again seemed to doze.

Those of the party, who intended to form a portion of the household congregation, now dropped off quietly, and Geraldine, taking Lady Hungerford's offered arm, accompanied her to the places assigned them in the room, where the servants immediately assembled: and, to Geraldine's great satisfaction, Lord Hervey, and not Major Tankerville, approached the table on which lay the Bible, and opened the sacred volume at the chapter selected. Before, however, he took the chair placed for him,

Lord Hervey approached his mother and Geraldine, and, telling the former that he had forgotten to express his wish, that all present should join in a hymn previous to the reading, requested our heroine to lead the voices, after he should have given out the first verse of the hymn selected, which was the following :—

“ Jesus ! thy blood and righteousness  
My beauty are, my glorious dress,  
'Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,  
With joy shall I lift up my head.

“ When from the dust of death I rise,  
To take my mansion in the skies,  
E'en then shall this be all my plea,  
Jesus hath lived . . . hath died for me.

“ Bold shall I stand in that great day,  
For who aught to my charge shall lay ?  
Fully through Thee absolv'd I am  
From sin and fear, from guilt and shame.

“ And when the dead shall hear thy voice,  
Thy banish'd children shall rejoice,  
Their beauty this, their glorious dress,  
Jesus ! the Lord, our Righteousness !”

Geraldine, having chosen a tune well known to most of those present, was joined at first timidly, then more boldly, by many around her, especially by one fine manly voice, which she afterwards found was Colonel Torrington's, and, during the last two verses, an impressive chorus was given

from the domestics at the further end of the room. After the hymn was concluded, all were again seated, and Lord Hervey read, with deep devotion, the seventeenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, returning to the fifteenth and seventeenth verses, which he had more immediately appropriated for his text.—“ I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth, thy word is truth.” Lord Hervey's commentary on these verses was simple and touching. The household and visiting domestics listened with the profoundest attention. Lady Hungerford wept, from a variety of emotions, and Geraldine found herself deeply moved. There was something in the genuine and unaffected piety of this young nobleman, which could not fail to inspire a respectful tenderness of feeling. The exposition being over, all knelt in prayer, and here the petitioner's expressions rose to eloquence, the eloquence of the earnest and devout. Geraldine felt that she was (perhaps unconsciously) the occasion and object of many of the heartfelt supplications which arose from Lord Hervey's lips, and she could scarcely restrain her emotion. It was a relief when, the prayer being over, she could escape, without returning to the drawing-room,

and rushing to her own apartment, she gave unrestrained vent to the sorrows of her heart.

“Oh ! why,” thought she, “why do I think differently from him ? Why, if he be justified in the sight of God, has this knowledge been given me of truth, which he thinks error ? Would that we had never met ! Wretched, wretched Geraldine ?” Another burst of grief followed. She recalled the time when a similarly painful question had arisen, whether, as a Protestant English girl, she should be justified in marrying a foreign Catholic, and she remembered that the result of her deliberations had been, that, provided Christians were earnest in their love and fidelity to their Divine Master, and full of forbearance and charity towards each other, it was outstepping scriptural prohibition to prevent the union of Catholic and Protestant. “Whence comes it, then,” thought she, “that scruples now arise in my mind, as a Catholic, which never molested me as a Protestant ? Is it that four years’ experience of disunion amongst Christians has taught me the blessedness of being of ‘one heart and one mind,’ or is it that Lord Hervey’s cast of disposition leads me to dread that ill-judged friends would usurp power over him, to mar my freedom and happiness ?—I cannot analyse my feelings, I cannot think to any purpose, my only refuge is prayer,”—and Geraldine, now sink-

ing on her knees, fervently prayed, that she might be led aright, and that the weakness and vacillation of her heart might be overruled, to advance the cause of truth at whatever trial to her own feelings.

## CHAPTER XI.

Those ancient doctrines charged on her for new,  
Show when, and how, and from what hands they grew.

*Dryden.*

LORD Hervey entered his mother's sitting room, on the following morning, before the hour agreed upon with Geraldine, and found Lady Hungerford on her chaise longue, her attention divided between the Court Journal and her Persian cat, which, with the "clearest views" respecting his own comfort, was claiming far more than his share of the pillow. Lady Hungerford welcomed her son with her usual tenderness, and her satisfaction increased when she found that Geraldine was to spend that part of the morning with her; till, on Lord Hervey's mentioning the subject of their projected conversation, she sighed, and, shutting the Bible, which he had brought with him, and had spread open on the table beside her, "I grieve to think, Hervey," said she, "that I, who used to have such a respect for the Bible, and always made a point to read a little in it every night, am now frightened at the

very sight or mention of the book, for, instead of giving me any comfort, I always happen to fall upon some text that has caused disputes, or, that some one says has been wrongly translated. If I had the courage to keep my own opinions like your father, I know that I should be happier, but I have not his firmness, and, indeed, I do not know that I ever had any opinions."

"But, dearest mother," said Lord Hervey, "you were happy last night. The tears you then shed were those of devotion. You were satisfied with the light I endeavoured to throw on the part of scripture selected."

"I was partly happy, and partly sad," replied Lady Hungerford. "I was happy in thinking of your piety and goodness. I thanked God that, in these days of carelessness, if not of open infidelity, you should be what you are!" and the fond mother kissed the open brow of her son, and blessed him.

"Now, why that deep sigh?" said Lord Hervey, after a little pause, and kissing his mother's hand as she leaned over him.

"I sigh to think of your father's prognostics respecting the Church; and I sigh still more, dear boy, to think that it is your party that has driven Geraldine Carrington into Popery!"

Lord Hervey started, and said eagerly, "Does she accuse us of this?"



“Hush, here she is,” whispered Lady Hungerford, as Geraldine entered, “and thank goodness, without her eternal Miss Graham.”

“I find that Katherine has engaged herself to teach, or learn some new work with Miss Scotney,” said Geraldine, approaching the table, on which she deposited her Bible, and a little note book containing the texts in question.

“So much the better, dear girl,” said Lady Hungerford, “for it is seldom that I can have this calm enjoyment of you, and Hervey, alone with me;—and even now you are going to spoil it all by these never-ending controversies.”

“It was Lord Hervey’s proposal, not mine,” said Geraldine. “For my own part, I have had enough of controversy, and desire to be free from its excitements and its cares.”

“Then, my love,” cried Lady Hungerford, “you shall have nothing said to you in my room that you do not like to hear, and Hervey would be the last person to desire it. He only wishes to converse with you here quietly, without all the usual ‘entourage.’ . . . Now, don’t mind me; I am always silent of a morning; but talk away just as if I were not here, only remember there are so many interesting topics for you and Hervey besides religion.”

Lord Hervey smiled, Geraldine blushed, and each opened their Bible, the former to show his

mother that if he intended to speak on subjects of more personal import to Miss Carrington, it would certainly not be in her ladyship's presence, and our heroine to prove to Lady Hungerford, that she had accepted the invitation to her room for no purpose beyond that of examining the texts in question.

"May I look at this note-book?" said Lord Hervey, securing the little manuscript which lay near him.

"I scarcely know whether to consent," replied Geraldine; "for I wrote those questions and doubts nearly a year ago, before I conversed with my uncle and Mr. Everard, and when I had no spiritual adviser near me, whom I could trust. I was alone with my Bible."

"Then this manuscript must have tenfold more interest with me," said he. "Would that you had been always alone with your Bible!"

"You will scarcely think thus, when you have seen the result of my private study and meditation," replied Geraldine.

"Then, would that I had been always with you!" added he, with emotion. Geraldine then pointing to the page in her manuscript, where the reference to scripture begins, requested him either to read, or to let her read aloud, while the other should refer when requisite to the Bible.—Lord Hervey first read as follows :—

*“ The following Texts are proof that the Church Triumphant is full of sympathy and good offices to the Church Militant.*

“ FIRST—THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT PASSES  
UPON EARTH.

“ ‘ Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses.’—*Heb.* xii. 1.

“ ‘ Which things the angels desire to look into.’—*Heb.* 13.

“ ‘ We are made a spectacle unto the world, and unto angels, and unto men.’—1 *Cor.* iv. 9.

“ ‘ God manifest in the flesh . . . seen of Angels.’—1 *Tim.* iii. 16.

“ ‘ Then shall I know, even as also I am known.’—1 *Cor.* xiii. 12.

“ ‘ There were great voices in Heaven, saying, ‘ The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord. How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell upon the earth.’—*Rev.* vi. 10.

“ SECONDLY—THEIR ACTIVE AGENCY.

“ ‘ The God of Shadrech, &c., who hath sent his angel, and hath delivered his servants.’—*Dan.* iii. 28.

“ ‘ My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lion’s mouth.’—*Dan.* vi. 28.

“ ‘ Bless the Lord, ye His hosts,—ye ministers of His, that do His pleasure.’—*Ps.* ciii. 21.

“ ‘ The angel of His presence saved them.’—*Is.* lxiii. 9.

“ ‘ For an angel went down at a certain season into the pool and troubled the water.’—*John* v. 4.

“ ‘ Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation.’—*Heb.* 1. 14.

“ ‘ Their (little children’s) angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in Heaven.’—*Matt.* xviii. 10.

“ ‘ And there appeared an angel unto Him from Heaven, strengthening Him.’—*Luke* xxii. 43.

“ ‘ And angels came and ministered unto Him.’—*Matt.* iv. 11.

“ ‘ Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for some have entertained angels unawares.’—*Heb.* xiii. 2.

“ ‘ Immediately the angel of the Lord smote him.’—*Acts* xii. 13.

“ ‘ I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify unto you these things in the Churches.’—*Rev.* xxii. 16.

“ ‘ He sent, and signified by His angel, unto His servant John.’—*Rev.* i. 1.

“ THIRDLY—THEIR COMMUNION IN PRAYER WITH  
THE CHURCH ON EARTH.

“ ‘ But ye are come unto Mount Zion, &c. and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first born, which are written in Heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.’—*Heb.* xii. 22, 23.

“ ‘ That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.’—1 *Cor.* xii. 25.

“ ‘ There shall be joy in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth.’—*Luke* xv. 7.

“ ‘ Charity never faileth.’—1 *Cor.* xiii. 8.

“ ‘ Pray one for another.’—*Eph.* vi. 18.

“ ‘ And the four creatures, and the four and twenty elders, fell down before the lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints.’—*Rev.* v. 8.

“ ‘ And another angel came, and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer with the prayers of the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.’

“ ‘ And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended up out of the angel’s hand.’—*Rev.* viii. 3, 4.

“I find, from the above texts, that the Church is a general assembly ‘under God, the judge of all,’ comprising, first, an innumerable company of angels; secondly, the ‘spirits of just men made perfect;’ thirdly, the members not yet received into glory. I find that, in this Church of the first born, there is to be no schism, but that the ‘members should have the same care one for another,’ that they are to ‘pray one for another,’ that in heaven ‘charity never faileth,’ (and can there be a more lovely exercise of charity than intercessory prayer?) I find in the heavenly vision given to St. John, that the angels at the altar offered up the prayers of the saints. Now, if these were the glorified saints, their prayers must have been for their militant brethren, because, for themselves, prayer had turned to praise:—if the word ‘saints’ may apply to those on earth, their prayers, in being offered by the angel, prove the communion through all parts of Christ’s one Church; and from this communion of love let me not be excluded!

“This beautiful truth has been abused; but no truth should on that account be abandoned; for what is there true or beautiful which has not been abused? There are greater and lesser truths revealed to man. Among the former is the great truth, that Christ died for sinners: among the latter, that His disciples laboured for the conver-

sion of sinners. Does my belief in the latter contradict or obscure my lively faith in the former? Just so, many subordinate articles of belief in the Church neither contradict not obscure the great foundation of her faith; for truth cannot injure truth!

“If the perfect communion of saints be proved from Scripture, and found to have been the belief in those early ages, acknowledged pure by the English Church (but, in reality, taken on trust, without her knowing much about them); when we honour those whom God honours, and believe that ‘great praise hath he in his saints,’—are we to *exclude* from this perfect and spiritual body, the humble holy Mary, virgin mother of our Lord? If the angel of God addresses her thus, ‘Hail thou that art full of grace, the Lord is with thee!’ and the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of Elizabeth, ‘Blessed art thou amongst women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb;’—can it derogate from our love and service to our divine Redeemer to add, ‘Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen!’—This is the whole of the address to the Virgin, called the ‘Hail Mary’ (Ave Maria); that part, ‘Mother of God,’ being added, when certain heretics advanced opinions against the perfect union of *God* and man in Christ, born of a woman.

“As, in the earlier ages of the world, Satan seduced all the nations to idolatry (or adoration of false Gods), so, in these latter days, has he with subtlety changed his mode of seduction, and now persuades men, that every proof of love, respect, and homage, to those whom God has honoured, is idolatry, till, in fear of this very crime, a conscientious but ignorant fear, men are brought to Arianism, and often beyond that, to what is termed *pure* Deism ! The Arian, who believes Christ to be only a perfect creature, may well fear to exalt his Virgin Mother ; but the Catholic feels that no love or honour, rendered to this pure creature, raised by her God ‘above other stars in glory,’—no homage, thus felt, and thus rendered, can approach to the eternal radiance of Him, who is co-equal with the Father, and unto whom is said, ‘Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever !’”

“You have put my mind into a perfect chaos,” said Lord Hervey, as Geraldine took the manuscript from his hands, and closed it. “Surely, if it were necessary to believe all this, our Reformers would not have rejected it.”

“Which of the Reformers do you mean ?” said Geraldine ; “for they differed and quarrelled so much, that it is impossible to quote them as a body on any one point of doctrine : for instance, Luther believed in the ‘Real Presence,’ and cursed



all those who called the Elements mere ‘symbols.’ Calvin believed in that which Luther anathematized, and, in his turn, cursed Luther’s belief as idolatrous. Wickliffe, their precursor, believed in Purgatory, &c. Now, you, Lord Hervey, and the greater part of the members of the Church of England, do not think with either Luther, Calvin, or Wickliffe, on the above, and many other points, and yet you are constantly talking with warmth of the glorious Reformers, and of their divine mission, believing most innocently that these men were agreed in all essential points.”

“Well then,” said Lord Hervey, “we will not dwell on those particular points of difference, but will merely take their authority on the obvious Scriptural sense, against the corrupt interpretation of Rome !”

“Do you mean with reference to the Communion of Saints ?” said Geraldine. “I have made extracts from those parts of Luther’s writings, which Mr. Everard permitted me to read (the rest he said were too coarse for a woman’s eye), and here is what the Patriarch of the Reformation says on this subject:—‘Who can deny that God works great miracles at the tombs of his saints? I, therefore, with the whole Catholic Church, hold that the saints are to be honoured and invoked by us.’ And again—‘Let no man omit to call upon the Blessed Virgin, and the angels, and

saints, that they may intercede with God for them at the instant (of death).’

“ Did Luther really continue to believe in the invocation of the Virgin and saints, even after he had strength of mind to give up the rest of the popish faith ?” cried Lord Hervey, in great surprise. “ Well ! it can only be accounted for by the difficulty which every one must feel in relinquishing the errors of youth for the convictions of riper years.”

“ And if this were the case with Luther’s strong mind,” said Geraldine, “ if he clung to error, merely because he was accustomed to it, may this not be the case with yourself ? Is it not very possible that you reject all the Scripture we have just read, the universal consent of the Christian world during fifteen centuries, and the testimony of this great reformer, just because you have been taught the reverse, and—‘ *you are accustomed to it ?*’ ”

Lord Hervey was silent for a while ; at length he said—“ The progress of the reformed principles was necessarily slow, and we owe too much gratitude to Luther to upbraid him for what he left undone. Of course, old prejudices hung about him : but they hung more loosely on his successors, and, as scriptural truth became more apparent, gradually fell off, to be trodden under foot, as they deserved.”

“Now, Lord Hervey,” cried Geraldine, “I am going to make what you will think a rash promise, but I will abide by it. It is this: I will remain as I am,” a nominal Protestant, nay more, I will settle into a genuine and immoveable one, provided you can find scriptural authority for believing in the divine mission of Luther, and his confederates !”

“Not at this very moment,” said Lord Hervey; “because, though I could engage to prove from Scripture, that he who opposes Antichrist must be for Christ, yet, in order to collect the most weighty texts which bear on this point, I should like some preparation.”

“I allow all due preparation,” said Geraldine, “and wish to argue with you simply by the words of Scripture; and as you bend to no Church authority, but confide in your own judgment on Scripture, while I have an equal claim to an accurate judgment, we must consent to keep as close as we can to the plain and obvious meaning, or we shall wander away from each other for ever.”

“Oh, not for ever !” interrupted Lord Hervey.

“I trust not,” replied Geraldine: “and yet what can be expected, when each is resolved that the other alone shall yield ?”

“And surely it is woman’s graceful part to do this,” said he, taking her hand which lay on the book near him.

“I will yield,” replied Geraldine, withdrawing her hand, “on the conditions I mentioned before, of finding from Scripture, that the Protestant Reformers were divinely commissioned to preach against the Church which had nurtured them.”

“Surely their commission, if not absolute, was implied,” said Lord Hervey, “in the corruptions of the Church against which they preached, that Church which had revolted from God, and which therefore God had cast off?”

“There is nothing in Scripture to justify this assertion, that the Christian Church could be cast off by God,” replied Geraldine. “On the contrary, if we turn to Isaiah, where the prophecy is applied by St. Paul to the Gentile Church, we shall find this to be impossible.” She then read from the ninth chapter, tenth verse,—“‘As I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that I would not be wrath with thee nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee!’”

“But this promise was to the pure invisible Church,” said Lord Hervey.

“It was made,” continued Geraldine, “to that Church, which, by the same prophet, is compared to a mountain on the top of mountains (*Isaiah* xi.

1, 2, 3, and *Mich.* iv. 12) ; by the prophet Daniel to ‘a great mountain filling the whole earth,’ (ii.35) and by St. Matthew to a ‘city set on a hill which cannot be hid.’”

Geraldine then employed the arguments which the Warden had used with Miss Graham, to convince Lord Hervey that a Church which was to preach, to baptise, and to exercise authority, must be visible; and brought him to own this necessity, while she fully granted the invisible nature of the spirit’s operation on the hearts of the elect.

“Well,” said Lord Hervey, “I am glad to find that we are disposed to agree thus far. Indeed, if you would adhere to Scripture alone, I should be full of hope; but, unfortunately, you bow to that most unscriptural thing, ‘tradition,’ and here we must part.”

“But if I cannot prove a Scriptural warrant for obeying tradition,” said Geraldine, “I am ready to give it up.”

“Are you?” cried he; “what a concession!”

Geraldine smiled, and read the following exhortation of St. Paul,—“‘Therefore brethren, stand fast, and hold the *tradition* you have been taught, whether by word or our epistle.’” She then read the 13th and 14th verses of St. John’s Third Epistle,—“‘I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pens write unto thee. But I trust I shall shortly see thee, and we shall speak face to face.’”

“I should have no objection,” said Lord Hervey, “to obey the unwritten commands of the inspired Paul or John, but tradition, like a snow-ball, has rolled on, till it has bid fair to crush the truth. There is no warrant for tradition, or, in other words, oral instruction on matters of faith, beyond the text which refers exclusively to the apostle.”

“I promised to abide by Scripture on this point,” replied Geraldine, “and Scripture will tell you that oral instruction in matters of faith continued, by the Apostles’ commands, to be given by their successors; for St. Paul says to Timothy, ‘The things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.’ I do not believe,” said Geraldine, “any more than yourself, that Timothy, or his faithful successors in the ministry could, in their instructions, venture to broach any thing new. I believe that they merely transmitted the faith once delivered to the saints.”

“But if these instructions were of any real import,” said Lord Hervey, “why were they not in the Bible?”

“How can I ‘dive into the secrets of the Most High?’” replied Geraldine. “It is sufficient for me to know that Scripture itself tells me that it is not the sole rule of faith, and commands me to obey likewise those oral instructions, which, by

the undeviating testimony of Catholic divines, have come down to us from the times of the apostles. I cannot disobey them without disobeying the Bible; for the command to 'hold fast' the unwritten word is just as explicit as the command to hold fast the Epistle."

"But if these traditions contradict Scripture, we must be sure that they are spurious, and unworthy of any trust," said Lord Hervey; "and that is exactly what these Romish traditions do most palpably."

"Indeed, I cannot agree with you," returned Geraldine; "and I do not believe that the Holy Ghost, speaking by the mouth of St. Paul, would direct us to any thing spurious, when it is promised that He would 'guide us into all truth.' You may think that the Catholic traditions contradict Scripture, because you have a very false idea of what those traditions are,—trusting, in fact, to nursery tales, and *Protestant tradition*, for an account of them,—and yet, in common with all the Protestants around you, following them most strictly in several articles of faith!"

"Impossible!" cried Lord Hervey. "My faith is grounded on the plain declarations of Scripture. I endeavour to obey every thing laid down for me in the New Testament, and nothing beyond."

"Indeed!" said Geraldine smiling. "Then, while you prepare for me Luther and Calvin's

credentials, I will give you some proofs of your unconscious obedience to traditions. But all this must be for some other time. The bell has already rung for the servants' dinner, and poor Kelsoe is waiting in my room to put on my habit; I must go."

"Come back to me, my love," said Lady Hungerford, "before you mount your horse. I must just say one word quite alone with you—not even for Hervey to hear."

"In which case," said Lord Hervey, laughing, "I must be off with the best grace I can."



## CHAPTER XII.

“ Whatever passes as a cloud between  
The mental eye of faith, and things unseen,  
Causing that brighter world to disappear,  
Or seem less lovely, and its hopes less dear;  
This is our world, our idol, tho’ it bear  
Affection’s impress, or devotion’s air.”

It was not till the evening that Lady Hungerford could say her “one word” to Geraldine, her other guests having claimed her attention at the time appointed for the private communication. In the mean time, the younger party rode during the fine part of the day, and on their return, while Geraldine was sitting with Lady Winefride in the drawing-room, and hearing, to her regret, that the latter had arranged to return to her cottage at Burnleigh, on the following day, Lord Hungerford entered, bringing with him a letter from General Carrington.

“ Oh ! this is joy !” cried Geraldine, kissing the well-known writing.

“ Yes !” said Lord Hungerford, “ and therefore I came to see that joy, more than to hear of the General, for I have had my own letter.”

“It is four months since I last heard,” said Geraldine, as she opened the letter, and for a while read silently. At length she smiled, and said, “What spirits he is in ! all hope, all ardour, in what he thinks the just and legitimate cause.”

“Ah ! confound legitimacy !” cried the Whig lord. “And so Don Carlos is getting on ?”

“Here is the letter, my lord,” said Geraldine ; “perhaps it is of later date than your own :” and she handed it to him, after she had taken off the seal, which she kissed, and placed in her bosom.

Lady Winefride smiled. “I see that you are a lover of relics ;” said she, “and the knowledge that your father’s hand has pressed that seal, endears it to you, especially as you have parted from the letter.”

“Can I make an extract from this part of the General’s account ?” said Lord Hungerford, pointing to what he referred.

“Certainly,” replied Geraldine ; and the earl withdrew to his study, when Geraldine, seizing Lady Winefride’s hand, exclaimed,—“Well may I value every part of that dear letter. It is the last I can receive from him, before he knows the truth—to him, the fatal truth, of my conversion to the Catholic Church.”

Lady Winefride pressed Geraldine’s hand, but was silent.

“I wrote to my father,” continued the latter,

“ when the Warden first arrived at Elverton, and I had made up my mind to consult him respecting my religious doubts. Although there has been little congeniality between the two, they have always paid mutual tribute to each other’s worth and talent, and my father will naturally conclude, that so deep a theologian as my uncle, Dr. Sinclair, must have quieted all my doubts, and fixed me in peace and gratitude within the pale of my own Church. This supposition, also, would be confirmed by my last letter, in which I did not mention the subject, for the reason, that my mind having become once more disturbed, without foreseeing what the termination would be, I did not wish to grieve him with anxieties when at so great a distance from me. All this false impression will now render my task more awful. *I* have arrived at my present position by degrees : but to him it will seem as the riven heavens, and the falling thunder-bolt !”

“ I will not lull you into a false security on that point,” said Lady Winefride. “ In earlier life, General, then Major, Carrington, was most intimate in the family of my sister and brother-in-law, Sir Hugh and Lady Mary De Grey, and at their house, I have witnessed a violence, an almost wildness, on the subject of the Catholic faith, which makes me now tremble for you, unless

the increase of years have brought with it moderation and liberality."

"My beloved father is all moderation and liberality," replied Geraldine, "on every other point. Indeed, on this, I have never heard his particular sentiments, but, though generally silent, as if from determined self-control, his look is terrific, and conveys to me the impression rather of his having received some dreadful injury from a Catholic, than of his having been influenced by any party zeal against the opposite creed. Can you not, Lady Winefride, recall something of that nature having occurred, at the time of your intimacy with my father?"

"There were some circumstances of mystery, connected with General Carrington, at that time," replied her ladyship, "which, as he was too lofty to explain them, perhaps irritated and fretted him. An unhappy estrangement took place on the subject, between him and my brother-in-law, and I grieve to say, that no open reconciliation was effected before the death of Sir Hugh De Grey,—although we may trust that in their hearts there was peace and brotherly love."

The entrance of Mrs. Torrington and Miss Scotney put a stop to this painfully interesting conversation. Geraldine retired to her room, a thousand flitting conjectures succeeding one to

the other in her mind. She had thought of her poor housekeeper's death-bed confession, the instant Lady Winefride had mentioned "circumstances of mystery which General Carrington was too lofty to explain." She also remembered her maid Kelsoe's knowledge of the General's estrangement from the family of De Grey, and from that family's faith, and that faithful attendant's terror and grief, at the bare possibility of a union between herself and Sir Eustace. Geraldine trembled at the step she was about to take, less from dread of her father's anger, than from grief, at being the one to open the deep wounds which, she felt convinced, he must have received from the perfidious or ungrateful conduct of some Catholic. The more, however, Geraldine reflected on her father's smiling and almost contemptuous toleration of all creeds, the more she was persuaded, that he was little likely to care about the religious opinions of any man, provided his "life were in the right;" till, at length, she was encouraged by this conviction to hope, that he might not, after all, be so very deeply pained by her adoption of whatever creed might suit her; and, supported by this hope, she joined the party at dinner, and received their congratulations on her 'good news from Spain,' with a cheerful countenance, though her heart still throbbed with anticipated ill!

"Pray, Lord Hungerford," said his lady, "are

you aware that Sir Eustace De Grey called here this morning? He sate a long while with Lady Winefride and myself, and was so chatty and pleasant, that I forgot all the letters and notes I had to write; and I was so sorry that Lady Anne and Miss Carrington were out riding all the time, and Hervey too!"

"And why did you not detain him, to escort his aunt home to-morrow, and keep us all alive in the interim?" said Lord Hungerford.

"Because he would not be detained," replied Lady Hungerford. "He made some bad excuses, and was so positive, that, at last, I was piqued, and let him depart."

"Eustace has guests at 'the Moat,'" pleaded Lady Winefride, "and guests towards whom he would be desirous to show all due respect."

"A couple of priests, I dare say," said Lord Hungerford, laughing. "Why, I should be delighted to see them; we have all sorts of priests and preachers in this house! Eh! Major, a glass of wine?"

In the evening, Lady Winefride took leave of Lord and Lady Hungerford, and of their guests, as she had arranged to return at an early hour to Burnleigh on the morrow, it being the eve or vigil of Christmas Day. I will take my leave of you, my dear young friend," said she to Geraldine, "as you pass to your room to-night;" and GERAL-

dine, pleased with the invitation, watched the time-piece in the drawing-room with impatience, during the hour which succeeded, and eagerly kept her appointment, when she found, as she had hoped, that the attendant had withdrawn.

“Miss Carrington,” said her ladyship, taking her hand, “were I to follow the dictates of my heart, it would be to invite your attendance with me, during this holy season, at the solemnities to be observed at Burnleigh, but I still recommend your avoiding, instead of seeking, your Catholic friends, until you shall have sufficiently questioned and probed your own heart. When this has been done, and your final determination taken, should that determination be to ‘forsake all,’ in order to follow Christ in the way he has appointed, of submission to his spouse, the Church, then make use of me: you will not find me wanting. These few words, ‘Come to me!’ or, ‘I will be with you on such a day,’ will be sufficient. I have watched you silently, but with scrutiny sufficient to praise Almighty God in you. Farewell!”

“Ah! Lady Winefride,” cried Geraldine, shrinking from the praise given her, “perhaps I shall delay a long time, perhaps I shall falter,—shall never have the courage. Oh! it is more difficult by far than I expected! What is to become of me when you are gone?”

“My presence here,” said Lady Winefride,

"can do nothing for you, and might prevent my future services, which, I again repeat, shall be devotedly yours. I urge you to nothing but *fidelity to your convictions* ! Do not act until these are fixed : but when fixed, remember the awful fate of him, who knew his Lord's will, and did it not !"

"Yes ! I do ! I will !" cried Geraldine. "Oh ! my God, have pity on me ! Lady Winefride, pray for me !"

Some hours after Lady Winefride's departure, on the following morning, while Geraldine, apparently engaged in some fancy-work, was absorbed in deep and painful thought, she was invited by Lord Hervey to walk. "You injure your health over this embroidery frame," said he ; "and I am sure that Miss Graham will accompany us."

"I think not," said Geraldine. "Katherine is writing letters of importance to Scotland, by to-night's frank : there will be no post to-morrow."

"And cannot you walk without your Katherine ?" said his lordship.

"Not very well," she replied ; "but I can work without her."

"What will you do, when Miss Graham is compelled to leave you ?"

"Why, I must reflect, that this is a leave-taking world, and look forward to meeting Katherine again, either here or hereafter."

"You are not in your usual spirits," said Lord



Hervey, gazing earnestly on Geraldine's countenance, and then turning quickly round, to ascertain that no one was in the room besides themselves. "You are not in spirits,—you are not happy ! How, in fact, can you be so, when, with your affectionate and sensitive feelings, you are led, by these new and pernicious friends of yours, to desert the old and faithful ones, who have loved you from your childhood ?"

"I do not desert them in heart," said Geraldine. "I shall ever think of them with tender gratitude ;"—a rush of overpowering emotions here so nearly overcame her, that she rose, and would have left the room, but Lord Hervey sprang towards her, and, seizing her hand, exclaimed, "Stay ! hear me once,—for the last time, perhaps. Oh ! if argument, if prayer, if warnings, are all unavailing, listen, for pity's sake, to but one request : it is, to wait,—to pause,—to reflect, during some months. You cannot refuse so small a boon, Geraldine !"

"Until the return of my father, I cannot, without his express permission, take any public step towards entering the Catholic Church," said she, with regained composure.

"Geraldine !" said Lord Hervey, again addressing her by that familiar name, and raising her hand to his lips, "you have seen that I love you !" —his voice was here checked with emotion, and he

turned away; while she remained motionless, and as if nerved to bear all that she had so long foreseen was to come upon her. Lord Hervey again turned towards her, and, in a firmer voice, added, "After four years of separation, during which other and dear ties forbade any remembrance of the bright and joyous being, who had smiled on all but me, I return to find this being all, and more than all, I had before known, and yet lost to me for ever!"

"Did I not believe that every trial is sent for our purification," at length replied Geraldine, "I should mourn that we had thus met, to give mutual pain, without any beneficial result. Had I not believed, my lord, that you were to pass the winter at Geneva, I should have remained at the Hall. Still, you were made acquainted with my religious opinions by Lady Hungerford, from the first hour of our renewed acquaintance."

"Acquaintance!" echoed Lord Hervey, much hurt.

"Our renewed friendship, I mean," said Geraldine. "You were immediately told of my wish to be a Catholic, and if, on that account, you believed me lost to you, I was so, and must continue so. My determination is irrevocable."

"Still, you will take no decided step at present," said Lord Hervey, eagerly. "You tell me that you cannot,—thank God for that! And now that

you must pause from all this controversy, will you not let some softened feelings have place in your heart? Will you not prove to your Protestant friends, that at least you leave them with regret?"

"They can never know all I feel," said Geraldine, turning pale, yet by great effort restraining her tears. "My dear Protestant friends must ever live fondly in my remembrance. They have every claim on my gratitude. Why should I ever love them less? It is I, and not they, who have changed!"

"Yes! cried Lord Hervey, "it is *you* who have changed, in spite of early precept and example,—in spite of spiritual advice and experience,—in spite of admonition, of entreaty,—of tears,—of ill-requited, though devoted, love!"——

"Oh, stop!" cried Geraldine, "this is cruel! Do you think yourself the only sufferer? Do you think that my heart is less torn than your own? Can you not feel, that it is far more terrible to inflict pain, than to endure it?—and on me falls this double load. Oh, Hervey! if we are about to part for ever, let it be in kindness!"

"If we are to part for ever!" repeated he: "Geraldine, first and dearest love, tell me, would you be mine, could you return my affection, if our faith were still the same?"

"It is simpler and better to tell the truth," said she, gently and mournfully. "Were I still a

Protestant, I *could* return your affection ;—and now,” added she, as the tears gushed from her downcast eyes, “be generous, and leave me !”

“Oh, my God !” cried he, clasping his hand to his forehead, “keep thou my senses, for I know not what it is right to do ! Geraldine, let us not part ! be mine, and let the secret of your unhappy change remain within your breast and mine ; I will never reproach you !”

Geraldine trembled violently, yet disengaged herself from the arms that were thrown around her, and said,—“Whatever I am, I must be that openly ; yet, where I can yield, I will do so. Let me have the free and open exercise of my religion. I will use that indulgence with moderation, and bless you for your goodness.”

“I dare not ! I dare not !” exclaimed he, with increased agitation. “I have promised not to make this concession : the promise was exacted of me ; I cannot grant it, my best love. I grieve—”

“Then, my Lord,” said Geraldine, “if we cannot meet on equal ground, we must decidedly part. I ask of you nothing but toleration : you ask of me a dereliction of principle. I cannot submit to despise myself, which the moral coward must ever do ; and whatever I am to God and my own conscience, *that* I will dare to be before the assembled universe !” Her dark eyes flashed, and her cheeks glowed, as she said this, in a tone

which brought the colour likewise to Lord Hervey's face.

“ But,” said he, imploringly, “ do not reject this, in the first moment of indignation. Think calmly, when alone, of all that really and intrinsically would be yours. Think, also, of all that must mar the domestic peace and public integrity of the man, who, in these days of controversial conflict, openly unites himself to a Roman Catholic ! Think of the conspicuous part I have taken in this war of opinions, and that I am born the heir——”

“ Lord Hervey,” interrupted Geraldine, “ I request that you will add no more. Enough, and more than enough, has been already said. We never can be more than friends, but we may continue to be such, respecting and forbearing one another. Farewell !”

“ Oh ! give me one of those first dear looks,” cried he. “ Let me for once,—for the last time . . . my loved, lost Geraldine,—farewell !”

## CHAPTER XIII.

How wilt thou then look back and smile  
On thoughts that bitterest seem'd ere while,  
And bless the pangs that made thee see  
This was no world of rest for thee.

*Keeble.*

KATHERINE Graham, having despatched her letters to Scotland, was leaning musingly on Geraldine's chimney piece, when the latter entered. One glance sufficed to Miss Graham, who, taking both Geraldine's hands, exclaimed reproachfully, "You have refused Lord Hervey !"

"Say rather," replied she, "that Lord Hervey has refused me !"

"Geraldine ! this is mockery," cried Katherine ; "you have goaded him on, till, in despair, he has said something which your pride has resented, and you have quarrelled."

"Far from it," said Geraldine. "I have been softened into weakness, of which I shall blush to think hereafter :—but he talked of secrecy, of cowardly secrecy, and this to a Carrington !"

"Did Lord Hervey require more of you, than you of him ?" said Katherine, surprised.

Geraldine here related the point of disagreement, and Miss Graham, after pondering for some instants, said, "This promise exacted of him, by whom was it do you think? Was it Major Tankerville?"

"To be sure it was," replied Geraldine; "and think you that I could be happy with a man who could submit to have a promise exacted of him? Never! I am ruffled at this moment, but very soon I shall be in greater peace than if every possible concession had been made me. I shall soon feel no other regret, than that of having ever harboured the thought of compromise and fetters."

"Geraldine, lie down, I entreat you," said Katherine, "or weep, or relieve this feverish excitement by the air. Your head must ache, for your eyes are full of fire."

"Yes! I am grateful for it. I am just in a proper state for all the tedium of this evening, and all the leave taking of to-morrow, for I must return home, of course, after Christmas Day. I feel as if this throbbing at the top of my head, and this necessity for talking, would last just so long and no longer, not that even then you will find me weak and lamenting... No! I pant to go onward!"

"You are, at this moment, full of resentment," said Miss Graham, "and, therefore, of false strength; but do not trust to this—it will soon fail

you, and the reaction will be in its turn quite as powerful."

"No ! no ! I shall not trust myself to dwell on the past, or on what might have been the future. I have much of vigorous action before me, and, till all is accomplished, I shall not think of repose. But tell me, Kate, are you disposed to leave Sedgemoor so abruptly, or had you not better remain here a few days, at least, after me ?"

"I remain here without you, for whom alone I came?" cried Miss Graham. "No, indeed, my Geraldine ; and, while on the road, I will tell you my future plans ; they are perfectly incompatible with any longer stay at this place."

Owing to the departure of Lady Winefride Blount, and the indisposition of Lady Anne Scotney, Lord Hungerford, on the announcement of dinner, led out Mrs. Torrington ; and the bewildered Lord Hervey, who, like our heroine, had nerved himself to all the usual routine of the day, but who was unprepared for any exertion beyond it, finding himself close to Geraldine, and far from Katherine, to whom Colonel Torrington was advancing, called out in distress, "Where is Lady Anne ?"

"She has already dined in her room," replied the unconscious Lady Hungerford ; "therefore, you may give your arm to Miss Carrington."

There was no alternative for either of them, but



to walk together arm in arm, and to sit side by side. Colonel Torrington and his lady exchanged looks, and the latter reported to Lady Anne, when she next visited her sick couch, that she had always said Lord Hervey meant nothing by his attentions to Miss Carrington, and that his present change of manner was intended to prove this to her, which was highly honourable: but that, in consequence, they should soon see an end to her revived Protestantism, and a fresh ardour for Romanism! As for the friend and confidante, Miss Graham, she knew not what to think of her."

"Why, you do not suppose," said Lady Anne, "that Lady Hungerford would ever consent to her son's marrying that Scotch Amazon, even should he muster courage sufficient; and why should he marry any one at all, so soon after Emily's death?"

"Oh! he was always full of that sickly sensibility," said Mrs. Torrington, "always in love with some one or other. This Miss Graham would manage him completely, which, after all, would be best for him. But what a daughter-in-law compared with the elegant and '*recherchée*' Geraldine Carrington!"

"Oh! but all that stiffness would be voted dignity, and that rude manner of contradicting, thought proper dash and spirit in the future Countess of Hungerford. I cannot endure either of

them, but any one is better than that ‘*manierée*’ Miss Carrington.”

On the morning succeeding Christmas Day, Geraldine and Katherine, with their attendants, left Sedgemoor Priory to return to the Hall. The former had been much tried by her parting interview with Lady Hungerford; especially as the latter declared, while tears ran down her cheeks, that it had become part of Geraldine’s new creed not to feel.

In vain did our poor heroine assure her that she felt too much to weep. Tears were the only test by which Lady Hungerford ever ascertained the extent of her own emotions: it was also the usual and accredited mode of showing grief and affection. Besides, Geraldine did not look pale enough, to satisfy her wounded friend. The fevered spot on either cheek, and the brilliant eye, gave to all but an acute observer the appearance of buoyant health; and Lord Hungerford, also struck by the glowing animation of her countenance, as she tremblingly expressed all the gratitude and affection she felt for himself and Lady Hungerford, exclaimed—

“Well!’ it cannot be helped, my dear. Every body has a right to their own opinions, and to publish them likewise, if he or she think fit. It is a pity that you and Hervey cannot make it out together. I never knew much of my late daughter—

in-law, and should have been proud of you : but a plague on all controversy say I ! I think you had better not see Hervey again before you go, poor fellow ! for I fear he feels this affair more than you do !”

Several miles had been passed before either Katherine or Geraldine spoke. At length, the former inquired whether her friend had seen Lord Hervey before leaving the Priory ?

“ I just caught a glimpse of him, on turning out of the park gates,” replied Geraldine ; “ he was stationed there, but evidently not wishing to be seen. I received this last night,” and Geraldine put a letter into Miss Graham’s hand.

“ I would rather not read it,” said Katherine, returning the letter ; “ I think it scarcely fair to intrude into his sorrow.”

“ I would respect it also,” said Geraldine, “ to any one else ; but you are his friend as well as mine, and I still hope may become more to him than I could ever be.”

“ Geraldine !” said Katherine, after a pause, “ do you know to whom I was writing, during that eventful morning of your decisive interview with Lord Hervey ?”

“ No, indeed,” replied Geraldine, “ further than that it was to Scotland—perhaps to that Margaret Fergusson, your other dear friend, and my rival !”

“ It was to her brother, Kenneth,” said Kathe-

rine, "with whom, two years ago, I discussed more points than the famous Calvinistic Five, and to whom I hold myself pledged to be faithful for weal or for woe."

"Oh! my own Kate, is it really so?" cried Geraldine, embracing her friend. "Then why all this secrecy towards one, who has ever opened to you her whole heart?"

"Because," said Katherine, "our engagement was at first but conditional, depending upon an appointment, which he has since obtained, but which has not turned out so lucrative as he had hoped; and our engagement was for a time suspended. An additional office, however, is now attached to the former, which more than makes up the required income, although it brings with it of course its apportioned labour. I never would mention our difficulties, because I knew your generosity, and I likewise knew my own and Kenneth's pride! We can receive assistance from no one."

"But now all is prosperous, is it not?" said Geraldine, eagerly; "you can marry your Kenneth Fergusson now, without further delay, can you not?"

"I suppose so," replied Katherine; "but you know that *I* cannot be the one to suggest that all difficulties are cleared."

"But you can tell him," said Geraldine, "that

‘wearing purple and fine linen, and faring sumptuously every day,’ have not made you disdain a more humble lot with him.”

“Something of that declaration was contained in the letter lately dispatched,” said Katherine; “but to require such an assurance would argue but little knowledge of Kate Graham. I sent it, however, for, when a man is poor, he is apt to be distrustful.”

Geraldine now questioned her friend concerning the rise and progress of this attachment, the family and connexions of Mr. Fergusson, the prospect of increased income, and the probabilities of meeting her friend again, and of enjoying her happiness. Katherine entered the more readily into the details of her engagement, and expected marriage, from the generous desire she felt to draw Geraldine’s attention from the subject of her own trials; and, for a time, so well succeeded, that our heroine’s thoughts were peacefully dwelling with Kenneth Fergusson and his Kate, “within a mile of Edinburgh town,” when the carriage stopped at the lodge gates of her own home.

Poor Mrs. Kelsoe’s temper was not proof against the accumulation of disappointments, which were included in this unexpected return to Elverton Hall. She had permitted hope to rise, each day, respecting her young lady’s preference of Lord Hervey to the young “Roman” Baronet, till, on

the Sunday evening, this hope was confirmed past all doubt, by the conspicuous part which Lord Hervey assigned to Miss Carrington in the family devotions, and which the latter had accepted with the dignity and ease so natural to her. Mrs. Kelsoe, and her great confidante, Mrs. Bruce, were, therefore, only startled by what appeared to them the thralldom of etiquette, when the sudden departure from Sedgemoor Priory was first announced to them, and remained incredulous to the dark hints of Monsieur Bigôt, respecting Lord Hervey's "mauvaise fortune," till the hour of starting, when the truth was rendered too conspicuous to be longer doubted, by the estranged looks and manner of the principal actors in this painful scene, and by the absence of his lordship when the carriage was announced, to which it had ever been his post to hand its fair owner. Stiff and grim sate the faithful attendant in the travelling carriage which followed that in which Geraldine and Katherine were discoursing, and too deeply mortified and disappointed to heed the silent sympathy of the young and simple Phoebe, whose tears, as they flowed at the remembered "petits soins" of the accomplished Bigôt, might have moved a heart less bent on higher matters, than was that of Mrs. Kelsoe. "I suppose you remember, ma'am, that, by your own orders, all the hangings are taken down in your own boudoir, and I am sure I don't

know where you'll find any thing the least comfortable !" said she, as she followed Geraldine and Miss Graham into the entrance hall.

"There are plenty of comfortable rooms," said Miss Graham, as they all followed the servant, who carried lights into the library.

"Well, ma'am, I only hope you will find it so ; but no one ever yet liked this library, with a strong north wind, howling, as it always does, on this side of the house. Mercy on me ! how cold it strikes ! I am sure Miss Carrington will catch her death of cold."

"Not with this delightful fire, and this large screen round our dinner table," said Geraldine, trying to smile, and elude the scrutiny of Mrs. Kelsoe's eye.

"Rather a contrast, ma'am, to the long dinner table, and the delightful company, we have had at the Priory, so cheerful and suitable to the season. It does seem, to be sure, so very unnatural, as it were, for young ladies to be moping at Christmas, of all times of the year, when they might spend it so differently ; and such a risk too for the health."

The entrance of Mr. Hilton, the steward, with the letters of that day's post, enabled Geraldine and Katherine to signify, by their deeply attentive perusal of those addressed to them, that Mrs. Kelsoe might withdraw, which, at length, after many attempts to linger, she was obliged to do ; and the friends were left alone.

“Geraldine,” said Miss Graham, “this letter would have recalled me from Sedgemoor, had I not returned here on your account. I must now arrange every thing for my immediate journey to Scotland.”

“What, immediately?” cried Geraldine sorrowfully: “but I will endeavour not to be selfish, Katherine. The return to Scotland is full of hope and joy to you. I conclude that the letter is from Mr. Fergusson.”

“No!” said Katherine, “it is from my uncle Graham, and is full of bad news, respecting the health of my dear grandmother. He, and my aunt, think her sinking fast, and wish me to take advantage of his escort back to Edinburgh. He will be in London on the twenty-sixth, which is to-day, and will leave it on the thirtieth. I must join him there, in the interval. The call is too peremptory to be deferred. Dear as you are to me, Geraldine, and now dearer than ever in your accumulating trials, still my father’s mother has the first claim on me. As for Kenneth,” added she, smiling, “I would have made him wait some months for my return, were it only to punish him for not writing.”

“Probably the letter is directed under cover to Lord Hungerford,” said Geraldine, “in which case you will have it by the cross post to-morrow evening. And then, if you hear not, I shall con-



clude that Mr. Fergusson has travelled up with your uncle Graham, and intends to surprise you by his presence in Portland Place, while I, as you perceive, am careful to follow Kelsoe's prudent advice, that 'young ladies should always know of a surprise before hand.'

The entrance of the servants with the dinner, prevented any further conversation at this time, and, during the rest of the evening, Geraldine, whose state of excitement called for incessant occupation, made rough drafts of the various letters she must now be called upon to write. She accomplished one to her former governess, one to a friend who had taken deep interest in her spiritual conflicts, some time previous to her present inquiries; and these, with other letters which were written before she went to rest, were all locked up, until she should have conquered the repugnance, the almost terror, with which she thought of writing that one letter, which must be sent before every other, namely, that to General Carrington. "After my Kate has left me," thought she, "I will bind myself to this difficult task: till then, I will be solely hers!" and on this did she act, and Miss Graham encourage her to act, during the few remaining days which intervened, before the departure of the latter for London.

"I cannot but rejoice, dearest Katherine," said Geraldine, in one of their many conferences, "that

a positive duty, although a melancholy one, recalls you at once to your favourite Scotland, and prevents your sacrificing yourself any longer to a friend, who, during the last six months, has been the cause of unceasing and painful anxiety to you. Well do I know, that you would have remained with me, in spite of love in the north, and popery in the south, had not Mrs. Graham's illness decided for the former."

"Yes! I would have remained with you, Geraldine, although my warnings and counsels have proved of no avail. However, I cannot but see that all is arranged for us far better than we could have arranged it for ourselves. I am prevented from being a witness of that, which, in the detail, would deeply pain me, but to the bare fact of which I have at length submitted in hopeless resignation: while you, instead of your opposing and disapproving Kate, may now surround yourself with enthusiastic admirers, and solace yourself with their approbation. One parting advice I must, however, give. Let nothing induce you to admit the addresses of any Roman Catholic, before you yourself become one. I speak this, well knowing that you are by far too highly favoured by nature's and fortune's gifts, not to have many enemies."

"I defy their calumnies," said Geraldine, proudly—too proudly: "but do not talk about

me just now, let us talk of Scotland. You are happy, dear Kate," added she, embracing her friend, "in the contemplation of an union, which truly deserves the name. Oh, what is the mere absence of fortune, when earthly affection and heavenly hopes are the same ! I envy you your journey back to your chosen land, where alone, according to your ideas, is to be found the purity and peace of the gospel. I think, Kate, that your very poverty is exquisite !"

Miss Graham smiled, but the smile was one of sadness, as she replied,—“It may be exquisite to contemplate in a poetical point of view, while nothing rough or coarse intrudes itself: but trust me, Geraldine, there are many things which can never have entered the scope of your experience, but which render poverty truly galling to the proud and sensitive mind. The personal intercourse which must be endured with inferiors, the possible intrusion of familiarity, the sense of equally ‘gentle blood’ with those who would either patronize or forget you ; all this——”

“All this,” interrupted Geraldine, “would be nothing, provided that he, for whom I willingly and cheerfully endured it, were possessed of sufficient real dignity, to feel unmoved by the weakness and baseness of others.”

“You have now mentioned not only my capabilities, but my fears,” said Katherine. “In spite

of my regard for Kenneth, I see the one vulnerable part in the character I had thought perfect ; and while I am ready to renounce much for him, without feeling it a sacrifice, I am forced to see, that, in renouncing much for me, he *does* feel it to be a sacrifice !”

Tears, a rare thing with Katherine Graham, rose in her eyes, but this proof of woman’s weakness was instantly conquered by woman’s strength. “Geraldine,” said she, “I trust that you so far understand my character, as to believe, that the paltry common-place fear, of not marrying the man I prefer, weighs but as a grain compared to the heavy humiliating load of convicted disappointment in his character.”

“Katherine,” exclaimed Geraldine, “this is harsh, and too hasty also, to be just. Wait till your arrival in London, and then, if you find him not—oh no ! not even then, condemn a friend unheard. Remember, also, that a man is bound in honour not to press on the devoted self-denying disposition of woman, but to *think* while she only feels !”

“Do not repeat all that fashionable sophistry to me,” interrupted Katherine. “When a woman, with the full use of her intellects, consents to marry an avowedly poor man, who, at length, informs her officially that he is not rich, as if this point were a novelty to them both—when he continues,

furthermore, to prate of honour, as if he knew the meaning of the word, and of exposing the dear object of his affection to privations, &c., as if this 'dear object' meant any thing but himself—what can she feel towards him, who is obliged to deceive himself before he has the courage to deceive her; what can she feel but contempt? This contempt I now feel from the bottom of my heart;—but oh! it is hard to feel it for Kenneth Fergusson!"

"Surely," cried Geraldine, "you must have some surer knowledge than mere forebodings of the worldly spirit, which is to cloud your future life? You must have received some communication which you conceal from me?"

Miss Graham, without reply, placed in Geraldine's hands the following letter, which had reached Elverton Hall that morning. The plausible contents might have appeared neither cold nor hollow to Geraldine, but for the news previously received of the writer's improved income. As it was, she perused this farewell with the deepest indignation:—

"My dearest Katherine,

"You have doubtless heard, through Margaret, of the addition made to my labours by the death of Mr. Crawford, and the determination

of those high in office to make each subordinate do the work formerly divided between two. A truly paltry method of retrenching the expense of public offices, for the additional salary is too contemptible to be mentioned. I do not expect to stand the labour of this mental treadmill much longer. It is perfectly unsuited to my former tastes and attainments. The exertions of my good brother, the Laird, to push me forward in the world, without untying his own purse-strings, may at length get me the long talked of secretaryship to Sir Alexander Gillespie, and exile me for some years to the Colonies. However ! be my fate what it may, it must, alas ! be a lonely one ; for I could not be so selfish as to involve the woman of my affections in hopeless poverty and misery ; and, greatly as I suffer, it will be some mitigation of those sufferings, to know that you, my ever dear Katherine, will exert the good sense and vigour of mind for which I have so greatly admired you, and endeavour to forget, amongst your more fortunate English friends, one, who can now, alas ! be only a source of pain to you. In dwelling on your happiness, I shall catch from it some faint reflection, and be rewarded for the sacrifice I now make. I shall, from time to time, hear of you through my sister, with whom I trust all those friendly relations will be kept up, which

formed her happiness;—and believe me, that no distance, nor lapse of time, can ever change the sentiments of deep respect and regard, with which I am, dearest Katherine,

Your sincere friend,

KENNETH STEWART GORDON FERGUSON."

## CHAPTER XIV.

I feel like one who treads alone some banquet hall deserted,  
Whose lights are fled, whose garlands dead, and all but he  
departed.

*Moore.*

Two days after the receipt of this letter, Katherine Graham left Elverton Hall, to join her uncle, Mr. Graham, in London. The parting between her and Geraldine was far beyond the mere suspension of their hourly and confidential intercourse, for each felt that much was about to be demanded of her strength and fortitude, before she again met her friend, and now, by mutual consent, these last farewells were brief, and not a tear was shed. Geraldine returned from watching the carriage, which conveyed from her the warm-hearted and faithful Katherine, and wandered through the lonely apartments. "Perhaps," thought she, "this desolation may remain unchanged, and I have heard the last friendly voice, and received the last friendly embrace, to be given me in my father's home!" This foreboding of ill, however, did not prevent her from beginning, on that day, her dreaded task, and, steady to her resolve that



neither timidity nor tenderness should have power over her, she finished, by the evening, her long and painful letter to General Carrington. Giving merely a rapid sketch of her mental history, up to the epoch of the Warden's visit, she, from that date, entered more into detail respecting her progress towards Catholicity, dwelling on those essential truths in which the Protestant communities had disappointed, and the Catholic Church had fully satisfied her. She recalled to her father how often he had both ridiculed and deplored her religious anxieties and doctrinal changes, and appealed to his tenderness, whether it would not comfort him to see his child in perfect peace? She then turned to the circumstances of her visit to, and return from, Sedgemoor Priory, disclosures as formidable as that on which they had depended; but in avowing to General Carrington that her renunciation of Protestantism had involved that also of her noble admirer, she felt that she could well appeal to her father's proud and susceptible sense of honour, treating it as a thing impossible, that a child of his could ever descend to compromise or concealment for the sake of any alliance, were it the first in the kingdom. She reminded him also of his early lessons in frankness and moral courage, and of his saying, that, when it resulted from the fear of man, "he who carried a secret carried a curse!" Little did Geraldine think that

every word of this theme would be a dagger in the heart of General Carrington, whose conscience had indeed dictated these lessons to his infant daughter, and whose lofty reputation and manly bearing, had added the more convincing argument of example in all that had ever come within the scope of her observation.

The following evening, after the dispatch of this important letter, Geraldine drew from her desk those already written to both her uncles. That to the Warden was carefully read again and again, a word added here, and retrenched there, where the meaning might have been expressed too concisely for clearness, or with too much amplification for strength: while that to her favourite, Edmund, after a hasty re-perusal, and a deep long-drawn sigh, was sent the same night to the Vicarage, with the hope of calling forth an answer on the next day. "Now the worst is over!" thought Geraldine; and, with somewhat lightened spirits, she wrote the following lines to Lady Winefride Blount:—

"My dear Madam,—The time has arrived more speedily than either of us, perhaps, anticipated, in which I am to prove my grateful obedience to your injunction, and to call on you for guidance and support. I left Sedgemoor Priory, on the twenty-sixth, probably for ever! My friend, Miss Graham, has returned to Scotland, and I now

accept your ladyship's invitation to Burnleigh. I had hoped for the still greater pleasure of welcoming you here, but on maturer consideration of my father's character and opinions, I judge it best not to invite your ladyship's Catholic servants amongst his Protestant household during his absence. This I have told him in a letter just dispatched. I am grateful for the strength given me—pray for me, that it fail not !”

The night, which witnessed the dismissal of the above four decisive letters, was the close of the old year ; and, if few even of the careless can, without some passing feeling, hear its knell struck by the midnight clock, and the instant announcement of its successor rang by the merry bells, it may be concluded, that to our heroine the memories and hopes of that hour were fraught with emotion. The several belfries in the town of Elverton were nearer to the Hall than those of the Valley Church, yet, from the direction of the wind, and the aspect of the windows, the bells of Woodbridge were those which fell the most distinctly on Geraldine's ear, and mingled with her first visions of the night, as at length, overcome by all the fatigue and agitation she had gone through during the past week, she for the first time slept profoundly.

It had long been the custom at Elverton Hall, for the tenants and household to celebrate the first day of the new year, and Geraldine, in the midst

of her anxieties, had not forgotten this. She gave directions to the steward, and to the new house-keeper, that the festivities should take place as usual, and confiding in the warm attachment which the principal part of the dependants bore their absent master, she herself superintended the placing on a bracket, at the end of the tenants' hall, one of the fresh casts of General Carrington's bust, which she had found awaiting her return from Sedgemoor. If anything could have increased the attachment which she had, from her infancy, inspired in the hearts of her dependants, it would have been this delicate appreciation of their fidelity and love; and the loud cheers, which reached the library in which she sate, were succeeded by a petition, that their dear young lady would condescend to pass along the north gallery, that they might thank her, and drink her's and the General's health. This could scarcely be refused, and Geraldine, attended by Mrs. Kelsoe, looked from this appointed place of communication on the assembled inmates and guests, with smiling welcome, courtesied with her usual grace to the uproarious health-drinking, and even made a short speech, after which she withdrew, in the full satisfaction, that, however ill at ease herself, she had contributed to make eighty persons as happy as hospitality and merry-making could possibly effect. This thought, and the expected reply from Lady

Winefride Blouut, cheered for a while the solitude to which she had returned in the library, where the faint sounds of music and revelry from the tenants' hall, were nearly overpowered by the winter blast, which rushed impetuously through the avenue, and howled amongst the brambles. Never having been an invalid, and therefore unaccustomed to solitude within reach of festivity, Geraldine felt as though this present isolation was a foretaste of that soon to come, and in the depressed state of her spirits, she listened to, and looked around, on every thing as though it were for the last time. On other occasions, her father and herself, with their guests, had joined the tenants' feast, and then returned to talk and laugh round their own blazing hearth : but now every one seemed already gone for ever ! The necessity of exertion, while anything remained to be done, had kept up the feverish excitement of her spirits, but now she must be passive, at least, till the answer should arrive from Burnleigh ; and to be passive, and to wait, was, just at this time of solitude and approaching bereavement, the most difficult and painful part that could be assigned her. Another hour passed, and Geraldine, finding it impossible to fix her attention to any book, was alive only to the strange loneliness of her feelings, now increased by the stilling of the distant sounds of human fellowship ; while new and mysterious breathings

seemed around her, and she felt that the powers of her mind were becoming unequal to struggle against the nervous sensations which began to steal over her. She pushed her chair backwards, till it touched the wall, and drew the table after her: still she could not fix her attention to any occupation. She cast her eyes around the room, and having neglected to raise the lamp, or to stir the fire, its vast obscurity oppressed her. Again she heard, or fancied she heard, the same breathing sound, and that it came from one of the large octagon windows, before the recess of which hung dark green damask curtains. Geraldine would now have given all she possessed to reach the bell, but could not; and she had not even the comfort of knowing that over-exertion of mind and feeling had alone produced this nervous state of terror. Some time elapsed, and she was still sitting erect, with her eyes fixed on the nearest recess, when, to her unspeakable relief, a servant entered, bringing a letter to her from the vicar of Woodbridge. Her heart now beat with contrary emotions, but, desirous to prevent a recurrence of the tremor she had so painfully endured, she pulled aside the dark curtains, and entered each recess, before the servant, having attended to the lights and heat of the room, again retired. Geraldine's dread of the letter from her beloved uncle was second only to the arrival of one from Spain. She felt that,

humanly speaking, nothing could change her fixed mental convictions; but she also knew how peculiarly susceptible she was to gentle remonstrance and entreaty, and especially feared that, in the present weakened state of her mind, the contents of this letter might induce her to hesitate and delay, when, having made the first difficult step, all ought to be steady advance. Mr. Sinclair wrote as follows :—

“ My dear Niece,—I cannot reply to your communication of yesterday without great pain, I might say anguish, of mind. Through the silent hours of the night, I lifted up my soul in prayer, for the companion of my youth, and the friend of my matured years. I prayed for your father, that the shock might neither injure him, nor recoil on you. I prayed likewise for myself, that no selfish feeling might embitter my regrets, that you have deliberately chosen to leave my simple ministry, and the venerable Church which received your baptismal vows as well as those of confirmation, and to desert that altar, where I have so often administered to you the bread of life, and where I had hoped to join your hand with one deserving of you. *Can* you renounce all this? But I reproach you not. May our Heavenly Father over-rule this evil for your ultimate good! I leave you now in words, that denote my feelings more perfectly than, in this hour of painful disappointment, I

could hope to express them ! They are the words of one who fought the good fight, and whom, I trust, we both shall meet, where minor differences shall be lost in the perfect love and enjoyment of Him, who will be all in all !—‘ We may die without the knowledge of many truths, and yet be carried to Abraham’s bosom ; but if we die without love, what will knowledge avail ? I will not quarrel with you about any opinion ; only see that your heart be right with God, that you know and love the Lord Jesus, that you love your neighbour, that you walk as your master walked, and I desire no more. I am sick of opinions, I am weary to hear them, my soul loaths this frothy food ! Give me solid and substantial religion, give me a humble gentle lover of God and man. A man full of mercy and good faith, without partiality and without hypocrisy,—a man laying himself out in the work of faith, the patience of hope, the labour of love. Let my soul be with these Christians wheresoever they are, and of whatsoever opinion. ‘ Whosoever thus doeth the will of my Father, which is in Heaven, the same is my brother, sister, and mother ! ’ Thus felt John Wesley, and thus feels and subscribes your still devoted friend and uncle,

EDMUND SINCLAIR.”

Geraldine pressed this letter to her heart. “ Dearer than ever,” cried she, “ never have I



been disappointed in your Christian charity, never have you given me a causeless wound, and your reward shall be found in that sure promise, 'blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy !' " In the letter to her uncle, Geraldine had enclosed a short but affectionate note to his wife, referring to the letter for all explanations, and intreating her never to speak to herself on a subject of necessary disunion, but to let all kindly intercourse continue on those many points of Christian union, on which the writer herself promised to dwell. She also gently intimated to Mrs. Sinclair that, having found some of the deepest theologians on the Protestant side, ineffectual to detain her from the Catholic Church, it could not be expected that one of her own sex should bring forward any thing new or unanswerable. Great, therefore, was her annoyance when, on the following morning, Mrs. Sinclair was announced, and in spite of Geraldine's reiterated entreaties, began, in all the confidence of ignorance, to enter the lists of controversy. An hour of worse than useless discussion ensued, when, becoming desperate at the total failure of her expected conquest, though she had not forgotten the weapons most familiar to her, namely, caresses, upbraidings, and tears . . . Mrs. Sinclair, habitually incautious, uttered many things, in the heat of the moment, which even she looked back upon with some misgivings, and which worked upon the

naturally haughty temper of Geraldine, till she fully and openly expressed her contempt. Things were thus gathering to a most alarming crisis, when a carriage drove past the library windows, and stopped before the hall. "*I am* at home," was Geraldine's reply to the precautionary enquiry of the servant, before he attended the summons of the bell, and, in a few instants, Geraldine's eyes and heart were gladdened by the sight of Mr. Everard.

"And so you thought I had forgotten you," cried he, as he seized Geraldine's hand, unconscious of the presence of Mrs. Sinclair: "You thought to yourself 'Oh, yes! old Everard knows very well when he is well off, and will find it very convenient to be displeased with me, until the Sedgemoor party breaks up, when perhaps he may find his way back to the Hall.' Ha! was it not so? You know it was!"

"No, indeed," replied Geraldine. "I knew very well that you had reason to be displeased with me, but that after your anger should have passed, nothing would detain you from visiting me in my solitude—a solitude, however, of only two days continuance;—here is Mrs. Sinclair."

Mrs. Sinclair feared Mr. Everard, and after many kind enquiries on his part, and timid replies on her's, she departed, telling Geraldine that she would write to her, and also make her uncle write

again; to which last assurance Geraldine paid little regard, feeling that the letter which she so carefully cherished could never have a successor.

“My dear girl,” said the old gentleman, when they were left alone, “I come charged with every thing that is kind from Lady Hungerford. I am the bearer also of a letter to you.”

“From herself?” interrupted Geraldine.

“Partly from herself,” replied Mr. Everard.

“Oh! why bring me letters or messages?” cried Geraldine, alarmed at the effect they might have on her. “I know the kindly feelings towards me of both Lord and Lady Hungerford; it has almost broken my heart to pain them;—I want no assurances of their regard.”

“But you must read the letters,” said Mr. Everard: “you must not be obstinate and prejudiced as a woman, while you are candid and liberal as a theologian:” and he drew from his pocket a thick letter. Geraldine was confident that Lady Hungerford could never have written all its contents, and it was, therefore, with more pain than surprise, that she drew from her ladyship’s envelope, the dreaded letter from Lord Hervey.

“Well!” cried Mr. Everard, “I shall look at the old pictures about the house, or have some talk with Mr. Hilton, while you read that letter—and remember that I am to take back an answer.”

Geraldine’s first impulse, as Mr. Everard with-

drew, was to throw the letter from her, while, leaning with both arms on a table, she remained for a while in painful and irritated thought, in which, however, Lord Hervey had no part, excepting as connected with Mrs. Sinclair's remarks during her most injudicious visit. Geraldine, with a mind jarred and unhinged, had received all the communications of that lady with apparent contempt, but they had wounded as deeply as could have been designed. To brave the world in the cause of truth; to join the band of hitherto aspersed Christian worshippers; to sacrifice riches, and popularity, and even the softer feelings of the heart, to the voice of conscience, all this was to bear adversity in the way that exactly suited her lofty nature: but to become a Catholic when all the neighbourhood were persuaded that she did so for the sake of Sir Eustace De Grey; to refuse Lord Hervey, when rumour gave forth that the difficulties had not been on her side, but on his; to pursue the course which would appear to justify all these assertions,—this was to bear adversity in the way that was the most galling to a proud and sensitive woman, and Geraldine recoiled from her appointed task. Conscious of her weakness, she dreaded to open the letter, which doubtless would tempt her by reasonings and concessions, which she might not have strength to oppose. “The art of Satan is employed in adapting temptations

to our own especial characters and tempers. Our education, natural turn of mind, family prospects, duties, difficulties, must all be considered, if we would detect the governing principle of our hearts, and learn whether worldly or spiritual things chiefly influence us. It is easy to abstain from that love of the world, to which our disposition is opposed;”—and, we may add, very difficult not to follow it in its plausible sympathy with some of our loftiest feelings. Geraldine’s vulnerable point was where she deemed the fortress the most impregnable, namely, the side of womanly pride and dignity, and the enemy of souls well knew how to hide the breach he was gradually making. What no argument, no tenderness, no ambition, could effect, might yet be gained by the paltry ‘on dits’ of a country neighbourhood, and Geraldine once more reflected, that to become a Catholic, yet to marry a Protestant, would be to stifle for ever the breath of scandal, and prove the purity of her motives to the world.

“Why, you have never even opened the letter,” exclaimed Mr. Everard, on his return to the library. “That is a confession of weakness, young lady.”

“A sense of weakness is in itself strength,” replied Geraldine, rousing herself, and determined to keep secret the struggle of her mind.

“Capital !” exclaimed he. “I never knew

you fail in an answer yet : but come, we must seriously talk over this business."

"I do not think you are consistent in the part you take in it," said Geraldine. "You once told me not to think of Lord Hervey, for that you wished him to marry the Countess Angela, when, on the contrary, you now seem to desire this ill-starred union as much as Lady Hungerford herself could do."

"Because the circumstances are completely changed," said Mr. Everard. "When I thought that you were very sensibly resolved to remain a member of the Church of England, in its true sense, acting up to all she inculcates, and becoming a guide to the ignorant, and spur to the slothful of her communion, *then* I wished you to marry a Catholic, that the prejudiced family, on each side, might learn wisdom, and cultivate peace. But now that you are determined to take this most unnecessary step, and to leave your appointed post in the Universal Church, to follow out some theories, in which, perhaps, I may too much have helped you, *now* I wish you to marry a Protestant, for the same good cause of toleration and peace. Where's the inconsistency of this?"

"I beg your pardon," said Geraldine, "for thinking your conduct inconsistent. I do not acknowledge the wisdom of your plan, but still, I give you credit for consistency; and now, may

I defend myself, in my turn, against your charge, of unnecessarily quitting my appointed post in the Universal Church?"

· "Yes! defend yourself; but let it be quickly done, that you may read your letter."

"My defence is briefly this," continued Geraldine. "I find, in the Church of England, no assistance whatever in obeying her commands, and I leave her, for the express purpose of fulfilling them in the ancient Church, whence she borrowed them."

Mr. Everard laughed, but, faithful to his trust, as ambassador, he recalled his young friend's attention to the important letter, which lay still unopened, and at length prevailed on her to give it an attentive and earnest perusal. As Geraldine continued to fix her eyes, if not her attention, on the last paragraph of the letter, Mr. Everard marked the conflict which was reflected on her brow. She then left the room, but, within an hour, she returned, and proved, by the reply which she authorized him to give to Lord Hervey, that, if the conflict had been severe, it had been succeeded by a resolve, as calm as it was determined.

## CHAPTER XV.

The door is closed—but soft and deep  
Around the awful arches sweep  
Such airs as soothe a hermit's sleep.

From each carved nook, and fretted bend,  
Cornice and gallery seem to send  
Tones that with seraphs' hymns might blend.

*Keeble.*

ON the third day following Geraldine's decisive conversation with Mr. Everard, the travelling barouche rolled once more through the lodge gates, on the Sedgemoor and Burnleigh road. Of the two occupants, one was weeping, while the other, her arms folded, and her looks fixed on vacancy, seemed perfectly unobservant both of the objects which were rapidly passed, and of the grief of her companion. Ten miles were traversed in this manner, and the first exclamation from either lady or attendant, was called forth by the sudden motion given to the carriage by the coachman, in turning the horses from the well known cross road, which led to the gates of the Priory.

"Pretty creatures," cried Mrs. Kelsoe; "it is as hard to turn a horse as a Christian, from what he's used to."



At the entrance of the town of Burnleigh, one of the servants descended to enquire at a shop the exact direction to the house of Lady Winefride Blount, and, as Geraldine heard the reply, "Next to the Catholic chapel, down the lane, first turning to the right," she recalled these words of St. Augustine,—"Among the many considerations that bind me to the Church is the name of *Catholic*, which, not without reason, in the midst of so many heresies, this Church alone has so retained, that, although all heretics wish to acquire the name, should a stranger ask where the Catholics assemble, the heretics themselves will not dare to point out any of their own places of worship." Geraldine now felt the reality of her vicinity to the friend who was anxiously awaiting her arrival, yet this caused no emotion. Wound up to that pitch of strength and self-possession, necessary for the task she had imposed upon herself, she had, during the three days succeeding Mr. Everard's visit, accomplished all that yet remained to be done, before taking the decisive step of becoming the guest of Lady Winefride Blount. More letters had been written, several painful conversations had taken place with persons in the neighbourhood, who conscientiously thought it their duty to give their warning voice to the infatuated Miss Carrington; and, after another scene with Mrs. Sinclair, and one still more distressing with the

distracted Mrs. Kelsoe, Geraldine had nerved herself to hear the solemn farewell of her beloved uncle and his children, and to tear herself from the circling arms of her favourite little cousin, who continued to upbraid her with—"You don't love your godchild any more!" Lady Winefride's invitation had been frank and cordial, yet, as the carriage now turned down the wooded lane pointed out by the shopman, Geraldine thought of the fond hearts she was grieving and forsaking, and, as she recalled Lady Winefride's reserved manner, sighed to think that mere kindness and calm approval was to greet her at the dwelling of her Catholic friend. During the last three painful days, her feverish excitement had amounted to irritability, the most distressing to her tender conscience. She now desired not to feel: it became almost a prayer, and, at length, mistaking exhaustion for apathy, she assured herself that the stunning of her own susceptible feelings was a permanent change, in answer to her repeated supplications. The carriage now stopped before the entrance to the first Catholic dwelling she had ever visited, and Geraldine was confirmed in her hopes of passiveness of feeling, as she followed the servant, who announced her arrival, in dignified self-possession, which seemed to have become a necessity arising from her present isolated position.

Geraldine had expected to find Lady Winefride

alone, and was surprised to hear the sound of other voices issuing from the door, before which the servant stopped. He paused, however, but for an instant, and then, proceeding to a small room beyond, opened the door, and Geraldine found herself encircled in the arms of Lady Winefride. A long and fervent embrace was given, while tears rolled down the cheeks of the elder friend. At length, the emotions of the heart found utterance, and, while she still held the silent Geraldine to her bosom, the long unheard tones of approval were poured unrestrainedly from the lips of the hitherto reserved and cautious Lady Winefride.

“Thank you, my kind friend,” said at length the unhappy girl; “I owe you much gratitude, and by and bye, perhaps, I shall feel it. At present, all is dried up here”—placing her hand on her heart,—“and what is worse, the spiritual as well as the natural affections are gone: the understanding too is obscured. I do not remember why I am about to become a Catholic; I have forgotten all the train of reasoning once so clear to me. I am proceeding mechanically, and often doubt whether my brain is capable of guiding me.”

Again Geraldine submitted to the fond embrace of her friend, and felt the tears fall on her brow and cheeks; but she would willingly have rushed from her, and from every one, and have courted

CHAPTER XVII.

Ave Maria ! Mother blest,  
To whom caressing and carest  
    Clings the eternal child ;  
Favour'd beyond archangel's dream  
When first on thee in tenderest gleam,  
    Thy new born Saviour smil'd.

*Kee.*

GERALDINE had sunk to rest, after the ha-  
of that evening, in a state more nearly app-  
ing happiness than she had known for years  
holy words pronounced by those she trust-  
the touching music which had accompanied  
followed her even in sleep, and mingled with  
visions of the night. That solo, which the b.  
voice had taken in the "Gloria" was again sung  
every inflection was remembered, and, in this  
visionary repetition of the evening, the chapel, not  
the drawing-room, was the scene. Angela de Grey  
likewise was there, in lieu of the little Protestant.  
It was she who took the first solo in Ricci's  
"Agnus Dei," and stood with her hands clasped,  
and a cowl over her face, uttering such unearthly  
yet lovely sounds, as an Eolian harp best gives.  
Then Sir Eustace sang not as he had first done,

## A TALE OF CONSCIENCE.

forth deep and solemn moans; and when Geraldine's turn, she gasped and could not note, and all the congregation waited, and up, till, at length, with a despairing cry she awoke to the unusual circumstance of finding the reality to be better than the fiction, and happy to lie awake a little while, in the enjoyment of her newly found happiness.

The following morning, Geraldine reminded Mr. Confrat that Mr. Conway had promised to devote an hour each day to her remaining doubts and difficulties, until she should cry "enough! I am satisfied!" A message was accordingly sent to the chapel house, and, after some time, Mr. Conway appeared, having been detained by peace making.

"You have been indeed well employed," said Geraldine, "there is no office to which a surer reward is promised."

"And now," said Mr. Conway, smiling, "I am to be peace maker between you, Miss Carrington, and some still unexplained doctrines of the Catholic Church, and where I see a willingness to know, and not to combat, the truth, I am delighted to be thus called upon. We, yesterday, got over the terrible difficulty of indulgences, that is, I trust we did so. Perhaps you will prove to me that you perfectly understand the Catholic doctrine on this point?"

“ I understand,” replied Geraldine, “ that, as Christ gave to His Church power to remit the eternal punishment of sin, on the sincere repentance of the sinner, so did He likewise bequeath to His Church the power of remitting the temporal punishment under certain conditions. If this mode of viewing absolution and indulgence be correct, I shall find little difficulty in remembering to distinguish between them. And it strikes me as a curious cavil in Protestant writers, that, while they have retained the power in their own Church of canonical punishment, they should object to the merciful part of commutation of punishment under certain holy conditions.”

“ St. Paul,” said Mr. Conway, “ saw fit to forgive the temporal punishment which still remained due to the guilty Corinthian, after his sincere repentance had obtained absolution. The Council of Trent,” continued he, “ proposes nothing more to our belief, upon the subject of indulgences, than that “ the power of granting them hath been given by Jesus Christ to His Church, and that the use of them is salutary, adding, that it ‘ should be retained with moderation, however, lest ecclesiastical discipline come to be enervated by an excess of mildness,’ which shows, that the manner of dispensing indulgences has *discipline* chiefly for its object.”

“ But oh, Mr. Conway,” suddenly exclaimed

Geraldine, "I had forgotten the most difficult part, the only terrible part of indulgences,—it is the carrying them into purgatory. I cannot believe that priests on earth can have influence over the state of separate spirits !"

"Nor does the Catholic Church assert it, in the sense which your objection seems to imply. She teaches, indeed, that indulgences are beneficial to the souls in purgatory, but she expressly declares, that they operate, not judicially, or authoritatively, but simply by way of assistance or satisfaction,—depending for their efficacy on the merits of Christ, which are offered to God in recompense for the sins of the deceased, and deriving the application of these merits from the execution of some good work, performed for that purpose by the living members of her body. It is clear that, in this doctrine, there is no undue assumption of authority 'over the state of separate spirits.' The influence exerted, is the influence of the merits of Christ; the authority claimed by the Church is, that of assigning the conditions, on which, in certain cases, these merits shall be applied: and to accuse her, therefore, of asserting an improper jurisdiction, for thus applying them, is no better than to say, in reference to another point in which you are already satisfied, that each individual, who breathes a prayer for a soul in purgatory, arrogates to himself an 'influence over the state of separate spirits.' And now for your next difficulty."

“The next which occurs to me,” replied Geraldine, “are the terms applied to the Virgin Mary in the Litany of Loretto. I feel her to be ‘blessed among women,’ I rejoice that all nations should call her thus, she is, indeed, ‘highly favored,’ ‘full of grace,’ and, if I find such joy in the perfect communion of saints in prayer, I must surely feel more love and confidence in this exalted creature’s prayers for me, at the throne of grace, than in those of any other saint in glory. I can say with the whole Catholic Church, ‘Holy Mary pray for me;’ but I shrink from giving to the created mother the titles and attributes which I ever felt were for the uncreated Son, her God as well as mine. I see a prayer book on that table: let me state my objections, and hear your defence, my dear sir, to every line of this Litany.” Geraldine then opening the “Garden of the Soul,” at the “Litany of Loretto,” which is used in private, as well as in public, by every Catholic, made a running commentary on it in the following manner:—“There can be nothing to alarm us in the opening of the Litany. On the contrary, the supplication to the Holy Trinity, to ‘have mercy on us,’ and the change, directly we invoke the blessed Virgin, to the simple ‘pray for us,’ show at once the distinction made by the Church between the creature and the Creator. I love all her titles also, as Mother and Virgin; but now follow those which



I wish explained. I do not, perhaps, object to '*Mirror of Justice*,' or *Righteousness*, because that she must have been, if full of grace; but, '*Seat of Wisdom*,' that appears to me to apply only to God. '*Cause of our Joy*,' is, of course, in reference to her bringing forth our '*Joy*,' our salvation, and I do not object to the poetical appellations which follow: they appear fanciful, but they probably refer to prophecy concerning this wondrous creature. My disapproval now begins . . . How can the Catholic Church venture to term the created Mary, '*Ark of the Covenant*,' '*Gate of Heaven*!' '*Refuge of Sinners*'? These high and glorious titles belong solely to Christ. I finish my protest against this Litany, by objecting to call the blessed Virgin, '*Queen of Angels—of Patriarchs—of Prophets*,' &c. Not that I mistake the sense in which this is understood; but it is a hazardous term to use, when we address our God as King of Heaven. It is placing her on seeming equality, and it is inviting the Protestant assertion, that the Catholic system is borrowed from Paganism; it is, in all appearance, the Jupiter and Juno of the Mythology, and I will frankly own to you, my dear sir, that I am hoping against hope, when I call upon you to explain and justify these titles given by your Church to the blessed Mary."

"Miss Carrington," replied Mr. Conway, "you deserve to be set at rest, for your observations on

this, and every point on which I have had the pleasure of conversing with you, show solid thought and discrimination, as well as pious sensibility. You are right in conjecturing that most of the terms of respect and love, given to our blessed Lady in this Litany, are taken from the prophecies concerning her, which prophecies are, by Protestant commentators, interpreted to mean exclusively the Christian Church. When David says, in the forty-fourth Psalm, ‘*The queen stood at thy right hand,*’ &c., you do not accuse him of placing the Church on an equality with God: therefore, in seeking for the figurative meaning of these expressions, when used towards our blessed Lady, we must, in common fairness, be guided by our immovable doctrine, that there is but ‘*one God,*’ and with this doctrine ever present to your mind, you will readily join in acknowledging the sublime dignity, to which, as mother of the world’s Redeemer, the blessed Virgin is exalted above the other created inhabitants of the heavenly Jerusalem. It is as Mother of God, that she is termed ‘*seat of wisdom,*’ He, being the eternal wisdom whence alone she is replenished. The ark of the Old Testament contained the covenant of the old law, and was holy, being sanctified by what it contained. So likewise is the blessed Mother holy, and called the *ark*, because she has borne Him, who is the ‘*Mediator of the new covenant,*’

just as she is called '*Morning Star*,' from being the harbinger of that bright day which has brought immortality to light. The other expressions to which you object, '*Health of the weak*,' '*Refuge of sinners*,' refer to our trust in her unceasing prayers offered for us to the throne of her Eternal Son. Thus, you will find, that in every prayer, litany, or hymn to the Virgin Mother, the great mystery of our redemption is the theme, and that every striking title, and endearing epithet, addressed to her, is founded solely upon our adoration of the Divinity which overshadowed, and was born of her."

Geraldine was much interested in following Mr. Conway through this explanation, and declared herself, at length, satisfied, respecting the use of these high titles in honour of the Mother of God. "I will rest satisfied," said she, "with all you have explained to me to-day. My remaining difficulties are not forgotten, but I have every hope of their being dispelled, and I must not monopolize your precious time."

"In truth, I have an engagement," replied Mr. Conway, looking at his watch; "but only tell me the hour which would be the most convenient to you each day, and I will so arrange my other affairs, as to reserve that hour for Miss Carrington alone."

Geraldine, with many expressions of her obligation to Mr. Conway, for the time and thought

which he had bestowed on her, now took leave, and went in search of Lady Winefride, who had promised to read her some interesting documents relating to the execution of those celebrated adherents of the Stuarts' cause—the Earl of Derwentwater, Lord Kilmarnock, and others.

Lady Winefride, however, was engaged with a poor woman, and Geraldine, while waiting her return to the drawing-room, carelessly took up the newly arrived county paper, when the following paragraph caught her eye:—

“It is no longer a subject of conjecture, that the beautiful and accomplished heiress, whose retreat has hitherto bid defiance to every gallant siege, has now fled into the ranks of popery; this flight, which is said to have taken place at night, from E——n Hall, to the cottage of a high born devotee of that school, having occurred some days since. Rumor, with its hundred tongues, is still busied in affixing different motives for this ‘Hegira.’ Some insist that the secret but constant visits of a popish priest in the vicinity have effected this *soi disant* conversion; others, that an attraction of a more tender nature is the motive; a third class confine their observations to the mistaken military ardour of a certain gallant general, who, without reflecting that ‘the better part of valour is discretion,’ has quitted the command of his own castle, and,

regardless of domestic foes, lingers to assist the cause of despotism in a foreign land. We understand, from good authority, that the fair 'renegade' will shortly embrace the double chain of hymen and popery; the plans of ambition and of interest, on the part of a certain impoverished baronet, having proved successful over feminine credulity."

"Impertinent! contemptible!" cried Geraldine, throwing the paper from her, and standing erect, like the image of her proud father, as Lady Winefride entered the room.

"Is *this* the result of your long conference with our good priest?" said her ladyship, startled at what she conceived a fresh misconception on Geraldine's part, of some Catholic doctrine.

"Lady Winefride," said Geraldine, again taking the paper, and pointing out the insulting paragraph, "You will perceive that, from respect to you and yours, I cannot continue your guest."

Much surprised at her young friend's manner, and still more by these words, Lady Winefride read what was given her. At first her colour also rose, and her countenance took that fixed determined expression which it had borne during Geraldine's first acquaintance with her. Soon, however, this passed away, and, at the climax of the insolent insinuation, she smiled.

"You can smile, Lady Winefride," observed our too sensitive heroine; "I cannot! To think

that vulgar crowds will, from this malicious paper, dare to utter their ignorant calumnies, and pretend to understand a character like that of Sir Eustace De Grey — this makes me feel as if I were determined to tread at once on the neck of this hydra, by taking leave of you, even were it for ever—but I cannot smile !”

Again did Lady Winefride smile, and, with all the open benignity which her countenance had lately worn, she said—“ There are other modes of slaying this ‘hydra’ than that which you propose. Remain quietly here for the present. It is far better for us to send Eustace into banishment, than to part, until letters arrive from General Carrington. In the meantime, it is possible that the arrival of Angela may permit me to publish the engagement, which I trust may be fixed beyond further doubt between her and my nephew.”

“ And well would it have been,” said Geraldine, “ if the unaccountable mystery of this engagement had not continued so long.”

“ It shall continue no longer for you,” replied Lady Winefride. “ I am at liberty to explain the peculiar circumstances, under which Angela has been placed, and which exonerate her from any charge of caprice in an affair, which, with her sensitive conscience, has been more painful perhaps to her than to Eustace. His position, however, is one of some trial, and I would that he were either wholly unshackled, or wholly bound !”

Geraldine's heart beat at these last words, she even forgot the annoying paragraph, in the interest they excited ; but the destinies of Eustace and Angela De Grey were not to be unveiled to her at that time. Lady Winefride's other guests entered the room, and necessarily occupied her attention. Morning visitors also called, and filled up the time till dinner ; while Geraldine retired to feed on somewhat turbulent thoughts. Hitherto the child of prosperity, and of that better part of prosperity, the golden opinions of all who knew and spoke of her, Geraldine could not bear the degradation (so she felt it) of being misjudged by the public. She could not yet submit to the only touchstone of her submission to God's designs respecting her, of bearing reproach and evil report for His sake. She said in her heart, as many other weak children of God have said, " Any thing but this !" but this was, from its very nature, the one thing appointed to the high-minded Geraldine Carrington.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

With two wings a soul is lifted up above earthly things ; that is, with simplicity and purity.

*Thomas à Kempis.*

IN the deep window-seat of the convent-parlour at N——, sate the Countess Angela De Grey, watching the merry troop of pensioners, that, frolicking round the young nun who had charge of them during this hour of recreation, passed from their appropriated wing of the building, and bent their steps towards the avenue, which led from the Convent to the high road, the limit of their walk being half way down this avenue, the whole extent of which was two miles. The fair creature, who followed them with her blue eyes, and faintly echoed their merry laugh, might, in that evening hour and darkened room, have passed for one of those youthful pensioners detained in penance. Her fair auburn ringlets fell on a cheek and throat of childhood's colouring, and her fairy figure was dressed with the simplicity of that age. Yet, as she turned to greet the lay sister, who entered with the evening logs for the parlour fire,



it might be seen that thought, and suffering, and bereavement, had left each their traces—that girlhood, and first womanhood, both, had passed, and that Angela De Grey was thirty.

As the lay sister crossed the room, one of the logs of wood escaping fell on the floor, and before the exclamations of the sister were over, the Countess had sprung from her seat, and seized the refractory billet, which she placed on the fire.

“Take care of the splinters with your little hands, Countess,” cried the old woman, smiling.

“Why, sister Martha, this is not the first time I have helped you to carry wood,” said the Countess Angela. “Do you not remember the great heaps we used to collect for you, during recreation, while old Cecily was fancying that our exertions were for her: but you were the favourite.”

“Ah! and I used to tell you, when you pretended to be preparing for works of mortification, that the greatest of all was having no favourite.”

“So you did, sister Martha, and you never spoke more wisely.”

“I never spoke wisely in my life,” said Martha, bluntly.

“Well, then, you can repeat wise things,” said the Countess.

“Yes, I can do that, thanks to our holy rule. There strike the seven minutes! How I do waste my time!”

“What, in talking to me?” enquired the Countess, laughing. “I wish I could have had you at the Bavarian Court, sister Martha; what a treat you would have been!”

“Much better for you to come back to us, and forget a wicked world,” replied sister Martha.—“What should I do at court?”

“Upon my word, I do not know,” said the Countess, still laughing, and embracing the uncouth lay sister, “excepting that it would have been a fine opportunity of suffering.”

“Ah, but we are not to do extraordinary things, when simple ones will serve us. I have got plenty of opportunities, within this enclosure, of suffering, and so will you, if you come among us, Countess, no fear of that. I must go now: have you any of the nuns coming to you to-night, or do you go to the workroom, or noviceship, till Angelus?”

“Neither of these, sister Martha, but something still better. I am going to reverend mother’s room, at half-past seven, to remain till the Angelus. In the meantime, I shall amuse myself, never fear.”

“When you were a pensioner,” said sister Martha, “bless you! you kept a bead of your rosary for me, a poor sinner.”

“And when I was a fine court lady,” replied the Countess, “I did the same. I never forgot to say an *Ave* for you, sister Martha, every night, and to go

to communion for you, on every anniversary of your feast."

"Bless you, bless you; whether your vocation is to be for the world or the cloister, you'll live and die a saint," said the lay sister, hurrying away.

"Oh, but you forget what a beggar I am myself for prayers," said the countess, following her. "Pray for me, sister Martha, that, in the spiritual retreat I am about to make, the will of Almighty God, respecting my future life, may be declared to me."

"Yes! yes! I'll pray," said sister Martha, "but depend on this, that Almighty God would rather work an open miracle, than that such a soul as yours should be led into error."

An hour from this time, the great bell tolled and rang the 'Angelus Domini,' which was echoed by that in the dormitory, at the further end of the convent. The Countess Angela was still sitting with the Prioress, when summoned to commemorate the ineffable mystery of the Incarnation. Both instantly sank on their knees, and, as the second toll gave the signal for the humble undoubting reply of the chosen Mary, Angela De Grey felt calm in the assurance, that, in the choice she was about to make, the will of God would overrule her own; and, casting aside all her doubts, her scruples, and anxieties, she said, from the bottom of her heart, "Behold the handmaid of

the Lord, be it done unto me according to thy word !” After this last of the canonical summons to prayer, strict silence being always preserved in convents, the Prioress pressed the hand of her companion, and passed along the upper cloister to the work-room, where night prayers were said : while the Countess descended to the chapel for the purpose of private devotion, ‘until the portress should come to conduct her and her attendant to the visitors’ quarters, which, as well as those of the father confessor and assistant priest, were on the opposite side of the quadrangle, at the back of the convent. The chapel, at this season of the year, was in total darkness by the hour of night prayers, excepting from the lamp which burned day and night before the tabernacle ; and, after the distant sounds were hushed, of the nuns collecting from the different corridors to the work-room, all was silence till the closing Litany, when the repeated “Ora pro nobis” came in full, yet softened, effect on the ear. All this to a stranger would have been most imposing, and this, in its religious sense, it was to her who knelt alone in the alcove beneath the choir, but, to a ‘convent girl,’ the romance and excitement of the cloistered life is superseded by a loving confiding sense of home, of childish joys, of early friendships with fellow-pensioners, of devoted attachment, nay, almost worship, for some chosen nun ; of those eras in the

life of every young Catholic, more especially marked in a convent education ; of her first confession, her confirmation, and the blessed festival of her first communion ! Neither are the examples of poverty, humility, purity, meekness, silence, ever wholly lost on the generous, uncalculating piety of childhood, examples more effective far than precept, however well administered ! The proud, the vain, the turbulent pensioner, has often recalled, in other scenes, these lessons of the heart, and has felt their purifying and soothing effect, while others, having lost the ties which detained them in a cold, sad world, have returned, to find all the young springs of warmth and mirth gush forth anew amidst the scenes of their childhood. And thus it was with Angela De Grey.

An orphan from the age of eight years, she was placed by her uncle and guardian, Mr. Richmond, in the school at N—— Convent, where its present superior was then the principal instructress. Her guardian, and other friends, came occasionally to see her, but, as no regular vacations are permitted at the convent schools, the little orphan may be said to have known no other home than the cloistered retreat at N——, until the age of seventeen, when, for the advantage of foreign masters, and as an introduction to the circles to which her birth entitled her, she was taken by Sir Hugh and Lady Mary De Grey to Munich, where a high

office at the Bavarian court fixed them during several years. Here a brilliant career opened before the 'convent girl,' which, with most of her age, would have dried the tears of regret, and effaced the scenes of her humble, simple childhood. But with Angela it was not so. At the age of twelve, she had declared to the confessor of the convent, that she had a decided vocation to be a nun, and a nun of that especial order. At sixteen, she repeated the same declaration; and, although the good father encouraged her as little, this time, in her girlish fancy, as heretofore, yet he thought more seriously of her inclination, and, on her leaving him, nearly heart-broken, comforted her by the assurance, that, if her call were from God, no change of scene and mode of life could detain her from obeying that call; but that, if gratitude and attachment towards the nuns, or any other human feeling, influenced her, in fancying a vocation when she had it not, the world would assuredly undeceive her. Angela remembered this, when, two years having passed at Munich, the wish, or rather the command, of the king was conveyed to her, that she should listen to a proposed alliance with the young Baron de G—ffe. Her early dreams, for so they then appeared, were renounced in favour of reality! But the predictions of the confessor were fulfilled, that, a true call from God to a hidden life, can never be resisted, except by

the perverse in heart. These apparent dreams of childhood had been the guileless offering of her pure being to Him, and were accepted ; while the apparent reality of the present was indeed the dream. Angela had retired from the court gaieties to a neighbouring convent, there to make a general confession and spiritual retreat, previous to her marriage ; and to that convent, after a fatal fall from his horse, while hunting, was the body of Baron G—ffe conveyed !

The following year, Angela returned to England, but her yearnings after N—— Convent were yet suppressed by her gratitude and pity for her old doating uncle, Mr. Richmond, whose infirmities, especially that of sight, demanded her constant care. Many years thus passed ; Angela De Grey continued her labour of love, and refused every proposal to quit him, for whom alone she remained in a world she had never loved. At length Mr. Richmond died, but left her still fettered, as well as Sir Eustace, by his dying wishes : and Angela's only alternative, a truly Catholic one, was, to engage her loved nuns at N——, and those also of the convent near Munich, in a Novena, or nine days prayer, for the complete assurance of the Divine will respecting her final choice of life. During this Novena, Angela was to enter into a spiritual retreat, and, on the final day, after mass should have been said for her, the

decisive reply was to be given to the offer of his hand and heart, which Eustace De Grey had written on the morning after the Reformation meeting at Elverton. Whether, on that, to him, eventful morning, De Grey had experienced pain or pleasure, in the despatch of this letter, can only be conjectured, as, after parting from Mr. Bernard, he proceeded on horseback to his solitary home, which was situated at an almost equal distance between the towns of Elverton and Burnleigh, the only spot now left to the descendant of those, who had been lords over all the lands around him. De Grey passed into his usual sitting-room, and, after standing for some time with his back to the fire, fixing his eyes abstractedly on the objects immediately before him, he started into some consciousness of a purpose, and of a determination to act on that purpose. He looked around for his writing materials, and, not seeing them, passed into a favourite reading closet, which he had lately fitted up as an oratory. The first object which here met his eye, was the cherished crucifix of Mr. Bernard, which De Grey had missed, and enquired for, in the chapel-house of the Abbey, without receiving any answer respecting its disappearance, and at the foot of which lay a note, directed to himself, containing these lines.

“DEAR SIR EUSTACE,—On the removal of my little possessions from the old chapel-house to this



in the Abbey, I thought, during some hours, that my cherished crucifix had been stolen. On finding it afterwards where Joanna's zealous care had placed it, I became aware of having suffered too much anxiety respecting this supposed loss, and resolved to part from my treasure. *You* will value it temperately, yet devoutly. Your faithful and obliged friend in Christ,

JOHN BERNARD."

"Oh! when shall *I* arrive at this perfect disengagement from earthly things," thought De Grey, as he reverently placed the crucifix in its destined situation, and then wrote the letter above mentioned, the answer to which was but to prepare him for that which should be sent at the close of the Novena, and which De Grey, in this interval, endeavoured to expect with the same calm and child-like simplicity of faith with which it would be sent.

The day, which saw the Countess Angela enter on her spiritual retreat, was the same on which the weekly county paper, with its coarse insinuations, arrived at the cottage of Lady Winefride Blount. It had lain unnoticed by De Grey on the table of the reading-room at Burnleigh, until the exclamation and friendly jog of a neighbouring popish squire, roused him from the pamphlet he was reading. "Capital,—'pon my word too bad;

here, Sir Eustace, here's something for you : no mistaking it. Oh ! capital !" and the paper was thrust into De Grey's hand. The hope that the reply from the Countess Angela might be acceptance of his hand, was, perhaps, the first feeling which crossed the indignant mind of De Grey ; the next thought was of the insult offered to Miss Carrington ; and, in the hope that he might arrive at the cottage before any of its inmates should have opened this evening's paper and county chronicle, he started up, and hurried from the reading-room, regardless of the loud laugh of his rough brother in the faith, and reached the drawing-room of his aunt just when, by the absence of the ladies at their toilet, he found it empty. A glance showed him the obnoxious paper : he seized it, and then perceived that the watchful care of Lady Winefride had cut out the paragraph of which he was in quest. At that instant, his aunt entered, exclaiming, " Why, Eustace, I thought you expected a bachelor party at your own house to-day."

" I do," replied he, " but I came here first, to effect what I see you have already done. Thank heaven that *her* feelings have been spared."

Lady Winefride was silent. She thought it more prudent, that neither of the parties mentioned should be aware that the other had seen this public conjecture respecting them.

“There is but one step to be taken,” said De Grey, striding up and down the room. “Should Angela refuse to become my wife, I must leave England.”

“You must certainly leave the neighbourhood,” replied his aunt.

“My former desire to enter into public life,” continued he, “is only hushed, not destroyed, and it is probably not too late to accept Lord ——’s former offer of his services in the diplomacy. I can write to him on the subject by to-night’s post, but, at the same time, must tell him that my final decision cannot be given till next week.”

“Eustace,” said his aunt, “you have hitherto so indulged me with your confidence, that I cannot help entreating to have it now.”

“You shall have it,” replied he, “as far as I know myself. I was, I dare not say I am, fascinated by Miss Carrington : but my heart was, in boyhood, and will again be, Angela’s. She was my first love, and shall be my last, if she will trust her happiness to my keeping. So highly do I prize the treasure of her pure affections, that I would not expose myself to injure them by even a passing thought of admiration for another ; and you well know, that had not these meetings of the amateur choir been irrevocably fixed, before Miss Carrington wrote to inform you of her coming, I never should have ventured to see, to listen to her again.”

Lady Winefride sighed. She loved and admired Geraldine, she venerated Angela, but Eustace De Grey was the child of her adoption and affection, and she saw his happiness in peril, if not wrecked. "Do you join in this Novena?" at length she inquired.

"I do," replied De Grey; "the prayers are the 'Memorare,' and 'Salve Regina.'"

"Yes," said Lady Winefride; "I am likewise engaged in them, and pray nothing doubting but that our blessed Lady's intercession will be heard, in the choice of life which Angela is about to make. Bless you also, nay principally, my dear boy. For God's sake leave me now; for I dread your lingering here to-day on many accounts:"—and De Grey hastily took leave, and rode homewards.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

“ And lo ! presaging Thy approach,  
The heathen temples shake,  
And trembling in forsaken fanes,  
The fabled idols quake.”

GREATLY as Geraldine enjoyed the social Catholic circle at Lady Winefride's cottage, the hour passed each day with Mr. Conway was that most fraught with comfort and encouragement, and, during the ensuing week she discussed with that pious and well instructed man all the remaining points of doubt or difficulty connected with her embrace of Catholicity. So grateful, in fact, did she feel towards him, who was thus made the means of establishing her faith, that she forgot all the little inelegancies which had at first repelled her, forgave his chuckling laugh, his snuff, and his round shoes, and watched for his visit with eagerness, which encreased each day. “ But how little did I think,” said she to Lady Winefride, “ that Mr. Bernard, who first inspired me with veneration for the Catholic priesthood, should not be the one to instruct me ! How often have I watched from the north windows of the Hall, that dear abbey

ruin, and fancied myself going on a pilgrimage to see the holy man, and receive his counsels and his blessing. I still cherish the hope, that he may receive me into the Church. And, oh ! should the time ever arrive when, in those long silent walls, I shall form, as you are doing here, a Catholic choir, I shall feel that my earthly wishes are fulfilled."

Lady Winefride smiled. "Then you are perfectly at rest, I trust, concerning our doctrines and our discipline."

"Perfectly," replied Geraldine. "Mr. Conway's last instructions were on that, to me, difficult subject, the giving the communion but in one kind to the laity. He made me observe that, when our Saviour instituted the Holy Eucharist, He made it a sacrifice as well as a sacrament, ordaining the twelve apostles (who alone were present) priests, to consecrate this sacrament, and offer this sacrifice. For this latter purpose, namely, that of sacrifice, it was requisite that the victim should be mystically immolated, which was then, and is still, performed in the Mass, by the symbolical disunion, or separate consecration, of the body and the blood. It was requisite also, for the completion of the sacrifice, that the priest who had immolated the victim, by mystically separating its body and its blood, should consummate it in both these kinds: and it is to the apostles, as priests of the sacrifice, that our

Lord gives the command, ‘Drink ye all of this,’ and not to those who communicate sacramentally. I objected that Christ, in express terms, promises, in the sixth of St. John, ‘to give His body and His blood to all His mystical members.’ To which Mr. Conway replied, ‘that, by that same unfailing word, the communicant does receive, not the symbolical disunion, or separate consecration, as in the sacrifice, but the whole and entire Christ—body and blood, soul and divinity—in the sacrament. He then told me that priests and bishops (nay, even the Pope himself), unless they offer up the holy sacrifice, do not partake of both kinds: so that there is certainly no injustice to the laity in giving them under one kind the whole sacrament. Mr. Conway then turned to the Scriptures. When Christ, after His resurrection, took bread, and blessed, and brake, and gave it to the two disciples at Emmaus, it is clear from the text, that He administered the holy communion under one form alone, and it is thus commented upon by Saints Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine, and others. Likewise the baptised converts of Jerusalem are described as persevering in the doctrine of the apostles, and in the communication of the breaking of bread, and in prayer, without mention of the chalice, in *Acts* ii. 42. This is also the case, at the religious meeting at Troas, on the first day of the week, to break bread. Mr. Conway then turned to the

first of the Corinthians xi. 27, ‘Whosoever shall eat this bread, *or* drink the chalice of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord;’ showing me how, by the alteration of this word ‘or’ into ‘and,’ the Protestant translators have altered the original text to suit their own views. Not that I could pretend to judge between the translations; but I found, from a marginal note, that learned Protestants had conceded this small but important word. Certainly, when I recall the accounts, in ancient ecclesiastical history, of the blessed sacrament being preserved under the form of bread alone, in the oratories and private houses of the primitive Christians, for private communion, and for the viaticum in case of danger of death, the primitive belief must have been that of the Catholic Church in this day. I also remember that St. Birinus, the apostle of the West Saxons, brought the sacred host into this island, in a cloth round the neck, called an *orarium*.”

“You have also doubtless read,” said Lady Winefride, “of the blessed sacrament being given, in early times, to baptised infants, in one kind only; that it consisted of a drop out of the chalice; and that, as late as the twelfth century, infants received under the form of wine.”

“Yes,” replied Geraldine; “and Mr. Conway, in explaining to me the different discipline, found



requisite at different times respecting the administration of this holy rite, reminded me of what I had also read, that Pope Gelasius required all his flock to receive under both kinds, for the purpose of detecting the secret Manichean heretics, who refused the chalice from erroneous notions ; and this change of discipline respecting the chalice, the granting it at some periods for special purposes, and withholding it at others, for fear of desecration, no longer disquiets me ; for I shall, as a Catholic, receive under one kind infinitely more than the communicant of any other community, who receives the pledge and remembrance only, while I shall receive my God !” Geraldine here paused, overcome by the intensity of her feelings. At length she said,—“ I find from Mr. Conway, that there was a sect, in primitive times, called the Capharnites, who were condemned as heretical by the Catholic Church, for holding exactly what is attributed to her by the Protestants in this day, namely, that the sacred elements were the suffering, not the glorified, body and blood of our Lord. Mr. Everard constantly declares, that, when a Catholic and High Church Protestant discourse calmly on this point, there is little or no difference between their faith, for each believes a great mystery. But there must ever remain this essential difference,—one Church holds, that, in consecration, a miracle takes place, the other Church

denies it. Setting aside the joy, the privilege of the former belief, I also think it far better for my soul to believe in the boundless love of my God, than to doubt it. He will never punish us for too much trust in him. It is the safer side on which to be mistaken."

That day at dinner, the party received the welcome addition of Mr. Everard, who had now returned to his bachelor home at Burnleigh, somewhat testy at being put out in his plans to make every body happy in his own way, and especially annoyed at what he termed the superfine punctilio of the De Grey family, in the absence of his favourite Eustace. Towards the close of dinner, however, the old gentleman's spirits revived, and, when he joined the ladies in the evening, he was almost in good humour with every body. During a 'tête-à-tête' which he contrived with Geraldine, he imparted to her that Lord Hervey was hurt at not having received a reply from herself to the long letter he had sent to the Hall, particularly as she had never fulfilled her promise, respecting some controversial points on which each had something to impart.

"Lord Hervey must not be hurt at my declining to correspond with him on any topic," replied Geraldine. "The long letter, which I received by you at Elverton, contained the point, which, could his lordship but have proved, would, accord-

ing to a promise I gave him, have recalled me to Protestantism. This was, giving me evidence from Scripture, that the Reformers had a divine commission, as had the Jewish followers of our Lord, to leave the Church which had nurtured them, and to found new Churches. Now, you and my uncle would of course say, 'Talk not of 'leaving,' or of 'founding;' these terms apply not to reforming or remodelling.' But Lord Hervey being not High Church, but very Low Church, does talk with exultation of '*leaving*' a 'corrupt' and 'wholly vile' and 'abominable thing,' and treading her idolatries under foot, specifying as such the vital doctrines of the Catholic Church. However, as he cannot, after all his attacks, give me one text to prove the divine mission of the Reformers, he actually, at the close of his letter, takes his sword and buckler from the armoury of the High Church, and tells me that an express and supernatural mission is not to be expected or required of the Reformers, who were but restorers of primitive simplicity."

"Well, but you must give him some answer," said Mr. Everard.

"Then tell Lord Hervey," said Geraldine, "that, as the command to 'obey them that have the rule of you' is divine, and so explicit that the simplest child can understand it, so nothing, that is not equally divine and equally explicit, can

justify the disobedience of the Reformers to their divinely-appointed rulers, and, as this counter-order cannot be found any where in Scripture, the original command stands in its full force against all who have dared to revolt against the Church established by God."

"I will tell him this," said Mr. Everard; "but there is something else still required of you. You promised Hervey a paper of proofs, that he and other Protestants, in some instances, follow tradition instead of Scripture."

"I can easily send him that paper," said Geraldine. "It was written at Sedgemoor, but it would have been ill-timed to have given it, and I afterwards mislaid and forgot it."

She then drew the paper in question from many others, theological and controversial, which had accumulated in her desk, and placed it in Mr. Everard's hand.

"Scripture gives intimation of the first day being sanctified by the resurrection of our Lord, but never of its superseding and deposing the old Sabbath, which was hallowed from the creation of the world. The first precept in the Bible is, to sanctify the seventh day. This obligation is enforced by every possible injunction throughout the old law, and when Christ appears, he confirms it, by saying, 'I am not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil.' Yet, with all this weight of Scripture

authority for keeping the Sabbath day holy, you disobey it, and follow tradition, in transferring its duties to the first day of the week, while you make this day of hitherto sacred rest, one of tenfold labour.

“Christ commands you to wash the feet of your brethren, and accompanies the command by every inducement of tenderness, of warning, and of example. Yet you disobey this plain injunction of Scripture, and follow tradition, which teaches that this command is figurative.

“Scripture gives no express warrant for the baptism of infants. On the contrary, faith is invariably stipulated for as essential, before admittance to that sacrament, and every instance of baptism throughout the New Testament, is of adults only. Yet you follow tradition, which admits unconscious infants to the sacrament of baptism.

“You receive, and constantly repeat, the apostles’ creed, for which no authority is given from Scripture, but wholly from tradition, which teaches, that these articles of faith were collected into that form during the lives of the apostles, and received their sanction.”

“Well ! well ! I will give Hervey this paper, when next I see him,” said Mr. Everard. “By the bye, that ‘calamity of his time,’ as Camden calls the Bishop of Llandaff, that Major Tanker-

ville, has converted Miss Scotney, whom he intends for Hervey, and is himself a good deal closeted with Lady Anne !”

“ Miss Carrington !” cried Lady Winefride from the tea-table ; “ that laugh was music to my ear. Come to our round table, and bring Mr. Everard with you. He likes the first aroma of the tea, and I will indulge him.”

Amongst the circle at the tea-table, was the Reverend Mr. Grant, father of the young lady who had assisted, with so many scruples, at the first rehearsal of the sacred music. This gentleman, though peremptory with his daughter on the subject of popish acquaintances, yet lived on the most friendly terms himself with Lady Winefride and the Catholic priest; sent her ladyship his daily newspaper, accepted her first grapes, and was her usual partner at whist in the winter sociabilities of Burnleigh ; making up to his conscience for this parleying with the enemy, by occasional yet gentle praises of the simplicity of Protestantism.

“ But you Protestants require such incessant excitement, such provocatives,” said Lady Winefride, in reply to a challenge of this nature. “ Our old neighbour near Burnleigh, the invalid Admiral, who never ventures to dine out, from the dread of encountering unwholesome diet, often invites me to share his boiled mutton and batter-pudding: I obey the summons, and find, accordingly, the mutton

and the pudding ; but behold the former covered with pickles, and the latter with preserves or wine sauce. Now this is precisely the *soi-disant* simplicity of your Protestantism, which requires the constant pickle of controversy, or the preserve and wine-sauce of new interpreters and new preachers, to keep you to your barren fare, and prevent your craving after the angel's food vouchsafed to Catholics."

" Or suppose, my lady," returned the curate, " we forgive our good Protestant admiral his little deviations in the superficies, in favour of his staunch adherence to the plain solid foundation he has beneath."

" In his mutton," rejoined Lady Winefride laughing, " which, with a change of name, he has borrowed from us, the sheep ! But a truce, good Mr. Grant, while I ask Mr. Everard his news from the Priory."

" I have already mentioned the most interesting part," said the old gentleman, smiling at Geraldine. " There are, however, some new guests ; but they lack individuality. That Mr. ——, the author of ' Popery and Paganism considered and compared,' is still at the Priory : his next work ought to be ' Protestant comforts considered and enjoyed.' "

" Mr. Everard, you treat that work of Mr. ——'s with more indifference than I expected," said Geraldine. " Do you consider the subject as too threadbare to rouse your indignation ?"

“ Exactly so,” replied he. “ Mr. — has just followed in the stupid track of earlier authors, and, as I have told him, if he and his predecessors were to follow up their reasonings with any consistency, they must be compelled to discard every token of respect, much more of adoration, to the Supreme Being. They must begin by pulling down their churches, because the heathens had temples of worship. They must renounce their belief in the Trinity, because that doctrine can be traced in the celebrated letter of Plato to Dionysius, as well as in the writings of other pagan philosophers. They must be compelled to own, that St. John borrows the divinity of Christ from the Eastern school, the parallel being much stronger both in name and character between Christ and the Indian Chrishnu, than between the rites and ceremonies of pagan and Christian Rome. They must also relinquish, for the same reason (namely the incarnations of Chrishnu), their belief of salvation through the incarnation and atonement of Christ. Nay, why admit the existence of a God, the Judge and Father of all, since the pagans had their Jupiter ! In short, the argument upon which Mr. —, and those from whom he has borrowed, seek to condemn the belief and practice of the Catholic Church, is too hollow to bear sounding.”

“ You mean, I suppose,” said Geraldine, “ that these traits of resemblance must necessarily be



found, from the pagans having retained, amidst all the corruptions of their polytheism, some vestiges of the truth."

"You are right," returned Mr. Everard, "and, if these gentlemen would be truly wise and truly learned, they would, instead of stopping short at Paganism, trace up to Jewish and Patriarchal times."

"But, sir," interposed Mr. Grant, "we object in the Protestant Church to retaining the Patriarchal, and especially the Jewish, rites, for they were but types and shadows of Christian reality."

"Well, sir! and in as much as the Jewish rites were typical, or national, the Catholic Church retains them not. Pray do you find her continuing the 'burnt offerings,' the 'meat offerings,' the 'peace offering,' the 'sin offering,' the 'trespass offering,' the 'ram of consecration,' and the 'scape goat?' Do you find, in the Catholic Church, the 'feast of trumpets,' the 'feast of weeks,' the 'feast of tabernacles,' the 'feast of the passover?' These have truly passed away; but not so the use of emblems. There is a distinction between types and emblems. I say, that those parts of the Jewish service are properly retained in the Catholic Church, which are emblematical, and which were ordained by the Almighty, as a homage to His majesty, and glory to be rendered to Him by his Church for ever. Well, sir!"

“ You must give me a little time, Mr. Everard, to settle my thoughts. You always rush on at such a prodigious rate, that quiet folks cannot follow you. I will think over all this in my study,” replied Mr. Grant.

“ Well, sir, well ! and in the mean time, I will indulge myself, if not you, by reading, (with Lady Winefride’s permission), a page or two from a pamphlet sent me last week, the production of a deeper brain than that which produced the ‘ Paganism and Popery considered.’ It is, in fact, a reply to this letter, and I own that I have borrowed from its pages several of the arguments which I have just been urging.” Here Mr. Everard drew forth the little pamphlet and began :—“ You imagine that little or no change has taken place in the Pantheon, by the substitution of all the saints in it for all the gods’ . . . . . ‘ I will suppose, if you please, an ancient Roman revisiting that temple : the first thing which would strike him, would be the sign of salvation—the image of Christ crucified, raised upon every altar,—and most conspicuously upon the principal and central one. On the right, the picture of one whom men are stoning, while he, with eyes uplifted, prays for their conversion, would rivet his attention ; and on the left, the modest statue of a virgin, with an infant in her arms, would invite him to enquiry. Then he would see monuments of men, whose clasped or

crossed hands, express how they expired in the prayer of hope . . . . . Around him he would see, at whatever hour of the day he might enter, solitary worshippers, who gently come in through the ever unclosed brazen portals, to keep watch, like the lamp which sheds its mild light upon them, before the altar of God. And I fancy it would be no difficult task, with these objects before us, to expound and fully develope to him the Christian faith; the life of our Redeemer, beginning with His birth from a virgin, to His death upon a cross; the testimony to His doctrine, and the power which accompanied it, exhibited in the triumph of the first among His martyrs; the humble and modest virtue His teaching inspired to his followers, their contempt of worldly praise, and the fixing of their hopes upon a better world; the constant and daily influence His religion exercises among its believers, whom it sweetly invites and draws to breathe a solitary prayer amidst the turmoils of a busy life. And methinks this ancient heathen would have an idea of a religion immensely different from that which he had professed: the religion of the meek and of the humble, of the persecuted and the modest, of the devout and the chaste. I believe too, that by seeing the substitution of symbol for symbol,—of the cross, the badge of ignominy, with its unresisting victim, for the haughty Thunderer,—of the

chastest of virgins for the lascivious Venus,—of the forgiving Stephen for the avenging god of war,—he would thereby conceive a livelier idea of the overthrow of his idolatry by the mildest of doctrines, of the substitution of Christianity for heathenism, than if the temple had been merely stripped and left a naked hall, or a tottering ruin.

“ ‘ After having thus allowed the heathen to discover, if he could, his ancient worship and morality in the very Roman Church which you have chosen, and explained to him the doctrines there taught, I would bring him to the only splendid temple in this country, wherein the Catholic religion has never been exercised, and where alone it has left no vestige of its truths and practices. I would bring him, after duly paying his entrance fee, into the Cathedral of St. Paul’s, and desire him to *guess* the religion to which it belonged. Would not his first question be, does it belong to *any* religion? is it a place of worship at all? No altar, no chapel, no emblem of any holy thought is visible; no point towards which men turn, as strongly concentrating the divine presence; no emblem of a peculiar dedication; not a worshipper, nor a reverential spectator: not one who, as he crosses the threshold, prepares his soul, as if approaching God, in prayer. There he sees men, with their heads covered as if in the public streets, walking to and fro, looking at the edifice only as at

an architectural wonder, cut off by a stockade from the great nave, because so little respect is paid to it, that, if open, it would be profaned without scruple; while the jibe and the joke, or the state of the funds, or the scandal of the day, alone divide, with their well-taxed curiosity, the conversation of the various groups. Would he, so far, see anything to show him that he stood in a place for *Christian* worship? . . . . But while he thus felt himself at a loss to discover what religion claimed the possession of this temple, I would direct his attention another way, and bid him look among the tombs and costly monuments which surround him, for some intimation of what God is here worshipped, and what virtues taught. There he sees emblems indeed in sufficient number,—not the cross, or the dove, or the olive branch, as on the ancient tomb, but the drum and the trumpet, the boarding-pike and the cannon. Who are they whose attitudes and actions are deemed the fit ornaments for this religious temple? Men, rushing forward with sword in hand, to animate their followers to the breach, or falling down while boarding the enemy's deck; heroes, if you chuse, benefactors to their country, but surely not the illustrators of religion. Of one it is said, that he died as a Roman would certainly have wished him, after having grappled with his enemy's ship, and rendered the destruction of one or both secure;

the epitaph of another is expressed in the words of his commander's despatch ; that of a third, in the vote of the House of Commons ; not a word of a single Christian virtue, of a thought for God, of a hope of heaven ; not a hint that one professed or believed in any religion. And would not the heathen rejoice to have found a temple, where the courage of the three hundred Fabii, or the self-devotion of the Decii, or the virtues of the Scipios, were so plainly taught, and held up to the practical admiration and imitation of men ?

“ And how would his delight increase, on more closely inspecting the emblems under which these virtues, or their circumstances, are expressed. Sea and river gods, with their oozy crowns and outpouring vases ; the Ganges, with his fish and calabash ; the Thames, with the *genii* of his confluent streams ; and the Nile, with his idol the *sphinx* : *Victory*, winged and girt up as of old, placing earthly laurel on the brows of the falling ; *Fame*, with its ancient trumpet, blasting forth their worldly merits ; *Clio*, the offspring of *Apollo*, recording their history ; and, besides these, new creations of gods and goddesses, *Rebellion* and *Fraud*, *Valour* and *Sensibility* ; *Britannia*, the very copy of his own worshipped *Roma* ; and some of these, too, with an unseemly lack of drapery, more becoming an ancient than a modern temple. This assemblage of ancient deities, as the

only symbols to instruct his eye, would assuredly go far to confirm him, either that his ancient religion, its emblems, and its morality, had never been supplanted, or had lately been restored. Little would it boot to explain to him, how behind that screen a sacred book was read to a few people once a week,—to empty benches every day,—which teaches men to abhor his idolatry, and worship God in spirit: and that learned men there preach homilies on the peril of idolatry, and the danger of admitting even symbols into worship. All this would, I think, but perplex him the more. If you are not permitted to make any images, or to have them in your temple, he would ask, why break the law only in favour of warriors and river gods? If you are allowed, why are the Christians of Rome to be denounced and anathematized for erecting those of Christ and his saints? And truly, I have no hesitation in saying, that if he reasoned as you have done, and followed your principles of judgment; if he pronounced upon religion by the shell, and not by the kernel, by the body, not by the soul, by the outward forms, not by the belief which they express; and if he persisted, like you, in giving credit to his own impressions and preconceived judgments, rather than to the protestations and declarations of those with whom he deals, I have no hesitation in saying, that he would see a much fainter impress of

Christian thought in the Protestant than in the Catholic temple ; much greater memorials of proscribed idolatry in the English than in the Roman cathedral.”\*

“ Come, parson !” cried Mr. Everard, as he closed the pamphlet, “ what say you to this ?”

The good-tempered curate smiled, and at length said ; “ I will tell you what I think of it all the next time I visit St. Paul’s, on condition that you, Mr. Everard, will, in the mean time, set a better example than you have done of late in Burnleigh, by coming regularly to the parish church, where we have neither gods nor goddesses in lieu of the saints.”

“ But the images of the lion and unicorn are over the chancel,” replied Mr. Everard, “ which scare my scrupulous conscience ; and there are ram’s horns on my very pew door, butting furiously against my Protestant principles.”

“ Your Protestant principles,” repeated Mr. Grant, shaking his head, but yet unable to help laughing : “ I fear, sir, that the chief business of your life has been to undermine them.”

“ Well ! well ! it is getting late,” said the old gentleman, starting up : “ let us leave these fair ladies to their pillows, and walk to our homes together.”

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\* See the Rev. Dr. Wiseman’s Pamphlet in reply to Mr. Poynder.



## CHAPTER XIX.

Come then, since now in safety we have past  
Thro' error's rocks, and see the port at last,  
Let us review and recollect the whole.

*Jenyns.*

SINCE the arrival of Mrs. Kelsoe with her young lady at Burnleigh, she had strictly adhered to the promise exacted of her, that she would not comment upon any thing she might either see or hear, until she should be invited to express her sentiments. During the first week, Geraldine had rejoiced at this precaution, when, by the compressed lips and extended nostrils of her attendant, she perceived the in-dwelling of "no popery," in all its turbulence. The following week the features were more at peace, and though Mrs. Kelsoe still sighed, yet on Geraldine's inquiry of, "I hope you are comfortable, Kelsoe," the reply was, "Every body does their best, ma'am, to make me so:" and this indication of softened feelings encouraged Geraldine, after a few more days had passed, to break through the reserve between herself and her faithful maid, by inquiring—

“Whether the Catholic religion did not appear to Mrs. Kelsoe in a fairer point of view, than when seen in the distance?” and the good woman, highly pleased at this renewal of confidence, immediately responded with, “Indeed, Miss Carrington, I cannot say but what it does. To be sure, some of the goings on are strange enough; but Mrs. Watson and Joseph have always a reason to give for every thing; and I must say, I had no notion that the common Catholics were so well instructed.”

“I suppose that, just at first, you were distressed to see so many sacred pictures and crucifixes about the house,” said Geraldine.

“No, ma’am, I was cured of that very soon; but no thanks to any one here in that respect. I came to a right understanding on that point entirely by my own good sense and reflection.”

“Indeed!” said Geraldine, smiling; “how was this?”

“Why, Miss Carrington, when I saw the figure of our Saviour dying on the cross, in my little room here, I was startled: but somehow, when I came to go to bed at night, I was pleased to have it there alone with me; and I thought to myself, when my young lady put up the likeness of the dear honoured General in the tenants’ hall, as a remembrance for us all, we none of us thought it was breaking the commandment, though it was his image; and, when we drank the Gene-

ral's health, and turned to his bust, we all knew what we were about; and so then I thought, if I like to look at the likeness of my absent earthly master, why should I not like to look at the likeness of my absent heavenly Master?—that's how I reasoned, ma'am."

"You reasoned very sensibly," said Geraldine; "I should like to hear some more of your reasonings."

"Why, I can't say," continued Mrs. Kelsoe, "that I found out any thing more, quite by myself; but I have no objections now to their making the sign of the cross."

"Have you not," said Geraldine, really surprised; "how is this?"

"Why, ma'am, to be sure, the first two or three days it did put me in a fine fluster, and at last I said, 'Dear me, Joseph,' says I, 'if you are thankful to God for your meals, can't you raise up your heart, without all that twisting and twirling of your fingers? where's the religion of all that dumb show?'—'Mrs. Kelsoe,' said he, 'the early Christians made that sign of the Cross, not only in remembrance of our blessed Saviour's dying for them and for us, but also to show that they were Christians, in the midst of Pagans and Jews, even though they died for it.'—'Well, but I am as good a Christian as yourself,' says I, 'so you need not be flourishing away before me; I should not make

a martyr of you.' 'But,' says he, 'though I have no chance of dying for the cross, I have a great chance of being laughed at for it, and that's very difficult to bear, and a good exercise for a Christian. You know we are told not to be 'ashamed of the cross.' 'Don't trouble yourself to quote Scripture to me,' said I, 'for I know the whole Bible by heart, and you Catholics know nothing about it.' 'I've got a Bible,' said he. 'Have you,' said I; 'well, I won't betray you.' 'Betray me?' says he; 'why Mr. Conway gave it me.' 'Oh, then,' said I, 'its not the real Bible.' But Joseph fetched it, and sure enough it's the real whole Bible. Think of that, ma'am!"

"I can tell you, besides this," said Geraldine, "that I still, and shall ever, retain my Protestant Bible, with the consent of Mr. Conway, because it was my beloved mother's gift. But continue your histories, for they greatly amuse me. Do you find Joseph the best informed among the servants?"

"Not better than Mrs. Watson, ma'am. She is very cool and composed in her answers (for she never begins); and then she is so kind-hearted, good soul! She found me in a terrible way, one night, with crying, and would have the reason; so at last out it came, that you, Miss Carrington, would soon be taught to dislike me, and to think it your duty to believe that I should be d—d;

‘and,’ said I, ‘how can I help myself? I believe just what I was told as a child: and no more and no less can I ever believe; for old people can’t take to new things.’ ‘But,’ says Mrs. Watson, ‘your young lady will be taught no such thing; for,’ says she, ‘you are no *heretic*, Mrs. Kelsoe, for Mr. Conway says that the guilt of heresy consists in an obstinate and wilful adherence to a religion that is false, and this is very different from you, who, at all events, are desirous to know the truth, and, I have no doubt, would gladly embrace it if you had discovered it.’ Then she said that Protestants very much misunderstood the feeling of Catholics towards them; that Catholics were sorry for Protestants, but that they would not dare to condemn any one. All this is wonderful, is it not, ma’am? so different from what I have been told—but then there are many things still that put me into such a rage. I can scarcely wait to have an explanation.”

“But this does not accord with the ‘good sense,’ on which you pique yourself,” replied Geraldine. “You should exert sufficient self-control to listen first, and condemn afterwards.”

“Oh, ma’am, but those saints, and relics, and miracles; how is it, Miss Carrington, that, with your fine and expensive education,——!”

“My dear Kelsoe,” interrupted Geraldine, laughing, as she received her gloves and handker-

chief from the irascible tirewoman, and hastened to obey the summons to dinner, "I am delighted to hear the result of your skirmishes with Joseph and Mrs. Watson; but I resign you entirely to them, and have no doubt of your finding their explanations perfectly satisfactory."

The dinner party was joined by the Reverend Mr. Grant, who had been invited every day by Lady Winefride, until his daughter, who was then absent, should return to him. Mr. Everard also had dropped in, as a matter of course; but it was not till the evening that Mr. Conway could find an hour's leisure from his arduous duties, when he entered the drawing-room at the cottage, just in time to bear company with Mr. Everard in the latter's eighth cup of tea. The party were unanimous in their greeting of the benevolent and joyous pastor, and the conversation took a lively and humorous turn, which Geraldine felt most beneficial to her spirits. Mr. Conway, far from damping, greatly contributed to, the innocent mirth of the party, and it was not until the conversation had insensibly taken a graver and deeper turn, that he said to Lady Winefride, "I have brought something in my hand, which I think will interest all your ladyship's guests, and which I know you will not object to seeing again. This is my yearly present from the baker at L——, to whom I formerly rendered some services. He is

a Jew ; and reminds me of his friendship, by sending me, every year, before Easter, which is, you know, his Passover, a ‘ cake of unleavened bread.’ ”

All were, indeed, interested, and the Passover cake was carefully examined, and passed from one to the other round the table.

“ It reminds me of the Scotch oat cake,” said one, “ it is so thin.”

Geraldine took the unleavened bread in her turn, and gazed on it with emotion mixed with awe. Every particular, relating to that commemorative, yet typical, feast of the Passover, was so familiar to her from her early study of Bible history, yet so far apart from all things present or personal, that, when she saw and touched this paschal bread, she almost fancied herself standing at midnight, staff in hand, to partake in haste of the lamb without blemish, and the bitter herbs, while blood was sprinkled on the door-posts and lintel of the house, in token of the “ Lord’s Passover.” At length, she remembered that Mr. Grant had not closely examined the unleavened cake, and as she gave it into his hands, he gratified her by showing and expressing much of the same train of feeling, which had been hers, and conversed for some time with her on the institution of this feast, which, as he justly said, though highly interesting in its commemoration, was far more so in its typical character.”

"Yes," said Mr. Conway, "when we pass on to that Last Supper, when the Divine Antitype took that paschal bread, and broke it, we look on its very form and matter as consecrated by His adorable hands."

"Do you mean," said Mr. Grant, "that you copy the matter and form of the Passover cake in your sacramental bread? I own that, when some one said that it resembled the oat cake of Scotland, I was much more struck by its resemblance to the Roman Catholic host, but I did not know that you intended this resemblance, and therefore I did not mention it."

"Yes, we use the unleavened bread at the sacrifice of the mass," replied Mr. Conway, "although this is a circumstance of pure discipline, which does not touch the essence of the Eucharist. With respect to the form of the host, we are guided by the beautiful allusion to the Eucharist in the Apocalypse, an allusion which can be understood only by the believers in a miraculous change in the bread."

"But yet," said Mr. Grant, "I have a fine engraving of the Last Supper from a Catholic original, in which the bread is quite in a Protestant form."

"Yes," rejoined Mr. Conway, "copies of Carlo Dolce's beautiful but ignorant painting are dispersed over England."



"But who expects accuracy from Italian painters," said Mr. Everard, "with their chronological impossibilities, and their inaccuracies of all kinds? Carlo Dolce has copied the peasants' roll of the country, which mistake has passed current with all those as ignorant as himself, though not so excusably so; for what could he know of the Jewish Passover, and of the unleavened bread?"

"I must express my regret," said the Protestant curate to the Catholic priest, "for having misjudged you on this point. I thought, with many others, that your Church had invented this peculiar form for the sacramental bread, on purpose to give (what shall I call it?) a more supernatural appearance to the eyes of the people; that their senses might be the more easily deceived, and the miracle of transubstantiation more easily credited."

"Tell us, Mr. Conway, from what part of the Apocalypse you find directions for the peculiar form of the Catholic host," said Geraldine.

"From the second chapter, seventeenth verse," replied Mr. Conway, "where Christ thus promises,—'To him that overcometh I will give the hidden manna; and I will give him a white counter (in the Protestant version rendered stone), and on the counter a new name written, which no man knoweth but he who receiveth it.' You, being a classical scholar, Mr. Grant, are of course aware, that, amongst the ancient Greeks, it was the

custom to vote, on public occasions, with white or black pebbles, gathered from the sea shore, or banks of rivers; and that, in process of time, and at the period of St. John's vision, these stones were superseded by small circular pieces of wood or ivory, like our modern counters; upon which *the name* of the candidate was inscribed. Now, according to the doctrine of our Church, to the communicant is given, in the blessed Eucharist, the body and blood of Jesus Christ; this is the 'hidden manna,' under the appearance of bread and wine. And in the sacramental host, is he given a white counter; and in the initials of the 'Saviour of mankind,' stamped on every host is he given that 'new name written, which no man knoweth but he that receiveth.' This interpretation is full of meaning, when the Catholic faith on this awful question is considered: but if, in the sacrament, there were nothing but bread, how could the Christian's 'hidden manna' be there? If Jesus Christ be not truly imparted, how can that new name remain unknown to all, save to him who receives in faith the living bread that comes down from heaven?"

"This is very striking," said Geraldine; "I have never yet understood any Protestant explanation of that passage: this is perfectly comprehensible."

"I believe," said Mr. Grant, "that you take other passages of the Revelations to guide, or at

any rate to authorise, part of your worship ; but is not this visionary and hazardous, Mr. Conway?"

"Catholic commentators," replied Mr. Conway, "suppose that the Evangelist, in his book of the Apocalypse, adopted the imagery, with which he represents his mystic revelations, from the ceremonies observed by the early Christian Church, in offering up the Mass, or Eucharistic sacrifice of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ. Therefore, we follow the description he gives us, in the opening of the eighth chapter, in the service of our altars : ' And another angel came, and stood before the altar, having a golden censer ; and there was given to him much incense, that he should offer of the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar, which is before the throne of God.'—' And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God, from the hand of the angel.'"

"You profess to follow Scripture, Mr. Conway," said Mr. Grant, "and yet you daily offer up the sacrifice of the Mass. Now, you will really oblige me, by telling me what interpretation your Church can possibly give to the twenty-seventh verse of the seventh chapter of the Hebrews? The apostle, after comparisons between the priesthood of Aaron and that of Melchisedec, continues thus speaking of Christ, our high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec:—' Who needeth not *daily*, as those high priests, to offer up *sacrifice*, first for

his own sins, and then for the people's; for this he did once, when he offered up himself."

"My good sir," replied Mr. Conway, "we truly hold that the 'one sacrifice of himself once offered cannot be repeated.' Christ can suffer no more. But the mystical immolation of the altar, the 'unbloody sacrifice,' as prophesied by Malachi, in the first chapter and the eleventh verse, must continue to the end of time. 'For from the rising of the sun, even to the going down of the same, my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering.' You will doubtless say that this 'pure offering' means that of a contrite and grateful heart. But just recall the tenth verse of the thirteenth chapter of Hebrews, where St. Paul says, 'We have an 'altar,' whereof they have no right to eat who serve the tabernacle.' St. Paul, in addressing the Hebrews, who never employed an altar but for sacrifice, would not have used that term but to denote the Christian sacrifice of the altar—the pure offering; and this acceptance of the Apostle's meaning has been shared by some of the brightest lights of the Protestant Church, who have contended, from this mention of the Christian altar, that the commemorative feast of the body and blood of Jesus Christ was a sacrifice, as well as a sacrament. And now, in seeking to reconcile you to the literal meaning of the Apostle's

words, and to the real sacrifice, let me freely admit the figurative meaning—the spiritual sacrifice of a humble and contrite heart, which God will not despise.”

“I hope,” said Mr. Grant, “that you do not take my objections and enquiries amiss; for I do not mean them offensively. Tell me then, Mr. Conway, how you get over the eighteenth verse of the second chapter of Colossians,—‘Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility, and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his own fleshly mind, and not holding the head, from which all the body, by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.’

As Mr. Grant quoted these verses, Geraldine turned with great interest to Mr. Conway, for they had appeared to her also to condemn the Catholic invocation of guardian angels, and she had intended to ask for their explanation in her next conference with her Catholic instructor.

“Your Protestant version,” replied Mr. Conway, “renders it, ‘the worshipping of angels’: our Catholic version is, ‘the *religion* of angels,’ which is more explanatory of the doctrine of those early heretics, to which these verses apply. These heretics were the followers of Simon Magus, and Menander, who believed that angels and demons

were the makers and lords of this lower world, and, as such, offered sacrifice to them. They also believed the angels to be the carriers of intelligence between man and the Almighty; but with this vital difference between their belief and that of Catholics, that these heretics set aside the mediation of Christ, who is the head of angels and of men, while no one praying in the spirit of the Catholic Church, ever begged his good angel's prayer to God through him, but through Jesus Christ, our divine head."

"And now," said Mr. Grant, "I call on you, my dear sir, to justify your Church, if you can, for making a distinction between mortal and venial sins, as if all sin were not hateful to God, and deadly to the soul? How can there be such a thing as a small sin? The very term is a contradiction."

"So thought Mr. Harley, our new convert," replied Mr. Conway, "before the fatal accident which befel his child, that fine little boy who was drowned last year. Till then I had never held any intercourse with the parents; but you must remember I was then sent for."

"Yes, you were then sent for," said Mr. Grant, "and my pastoral services were declined. I remember the circumstance well, with all its painful consequences."

"The messenger informed me," continued Mr.

Conway, "of the death of the child, but I could not conjecture the parent's motive in sending for the Catholic priest, instead of the Protestant curate, till, on my arrival, Mr. Harley seized my arm, and dragging me to the room where lay the lifeless body of his child, gasped out these words; 'There, sir! there is my only child. I early taught him to know his God; his heart was full of piety and truth, but he has died in sin: say! is he damned throughout an endless eternity?'

"I felt inexpressibly shocked. I could only entreat to be told the details of this calamity. They were these: the poor child had been tempted to take some sweetmeats, and when charged with the fact, denied it. Not being, however, an habitual liar, his blushes betrayed him, and his mother, greatly pained at this adding sin to sin, sent him from her presence, telling him, that as she could no longer trust or respect him, he must not approach her or his father the rest of the day. The boy was sent away more abashed than penitent, and his poor mother saw him no more till his spirit had fled. He had wandered into the garden, at a time when he was usually occupied by his lessons; the gardener had therefore omitted the usual precaution with a reservoir of deep water; and before the search began for the missing child, life was extinct."

“How dreadful!” exclaimed the listeners to this tale of woe: “the poor mother!”

“Oh, the poor mother!” cried Mr. Conway, “such a scene of heart-rending anguish I rarely witnessed: the child having been in disgrace, and dying before being forgiven, this rested on her tender heart. She could not pardon herself, for having been, as she then thought, too severe; but the father’s was the deeper woe. Thank God! I was able to comfort both. After some conversation on the necessarily doubtful question, of whether the poor child had repented of his twofold guilt, Mr. Harley entreated me to give him an exact account of the Catholic doctrine, on mortal and venial sin, ‘for,’ said he, ‘the Protestant belief that my child is at once an angel in glory, coupled with the contradictory belief, that the smallest sin is damnable, throws my mind into inextricable confusion. I then told him, that the Catholic belief in a distinction between mortal and venial sins, was founded on the written word of God, where we are told, that even the just man falls seven times a day, and that ‘men must give an account of every idle word that they speak.’ We also know, that there is not an instant of our life in which it may not suddenly terminate, without the possibility of our calling upon God for mercy. What, then, will become of the soul,



which is thus surprised? We are shown by Scripture, that nothing defiled shall enter heaven; and will, then, our just and merciful God make no distinction in guiltiness, as rigid Protestants maintain? Will he condemn to the same eternal punishment, the poor child who has died under the guilt of a lie of excuse, and the abandoned wretch who has murdered his father? To say that he will, is so monstrous a doctrine in itself, and so contrary to Scripture, which declares that God 'will render to every man according to his deeds,' that it ought to be universally exploded.\* Scripture makes a distinction between the degrees of sin, and so does the Church; and Protestants, in attempting to be wiser, lose themselves in endless contradiction and confusion. What means the distinction between the 'gnat and the camel,' between the 'moat and the beam,' but venial and mortal sin, or, in other words, faults and crimes."

"Mr. Conway," said Lady Winefride, "I am aware that our good friend, Mr. Grant, has one more weighty thing on his mind, about which he has attacked me once or twice. This is, the omission, by the Catholic Church, of one of the commandments, for the better furtherance of image worship. Are not those the proper terms, Mr. Grant?"

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\* See Milner's "End of Controversy."

“ Why, certainly, Lady Winefride, since you challenge me to speak plainly, I must say, that to expunge the second commandment from the Decalogue, is such sacrilege, that my personal respect for Mr. Conway can alone induce me to listen to any palliatives or excuses for it.”

“ But suppose that, in lieu of palliative or excuse,” said Mr. Conway, “ I boldly deny the fact ?”

“ But you cannot, surely, venture so far,” said Mr. Grant. “ I know that you have still the appearance of ten commandments, because you have divided the last to make up the number ; but you cannot account for the omission of the second commandment.”

“ Are you a Hebrew scholar, Mr. Grant ?” said Mr. Conway.

“ No, sir : I once knew a little of Hebrew, but of late years I have neglected that interesting study for those more applicable to my parish duties.”

“ But still you must be aware that, in the original chapter of Exodus, there is no division into verses. Nothing, in fact, to mark the line of distinction between the commands, except the spirit and the sense. St. Jerome and St. Augustine made a different division. The former separated the command respecting the worship due to God, into two parts ; the latter conceived the concluding part of the injunction to be (as in the one relating

to the Sabbath) an explanation of the preceding, and to form but one commandment; while in the command, 'Thou shalt not covet,' he deemed that a distinction should be made between the 'wife,' and the mere worldly goods. This division of the Ten Commandments by St. Augustine, was adopted by the Church, and has continued to this day; while Protestants have preferred and adopted the division of St. Jerome. For this preference we Catholics reproach you not, for we hold that the spirit of the Commandments is of far more consequence than any line of demarcation."

"Most true," cried Mr. Grant. "I was not aware that our second commandment was incorporated with your first."

"But, my good sir," observed Mr. Conway, smiling, "pardon me for saying, that, when persons attack the honour and integrity of others, they ought to be aware of every motive and of every fact."

"Certainly," said Mr. Grant; "but, sir, I do judge by fact, and not by hearsay. One of the little books of your school fell into my hands, and, owing to this division of the Commandments, the second of them was actually omitted, Mr. Conway: for the heads only of the commands were given, in this way, 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;' 'Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day;' 'Honour thy father and thy mother;' and so on."

“Yes !” said Mr. Conway, “you have seen one of the infants’ catechisms, in which everything is simplified and abridged. I will now have the pleasure of sending you the standard catechism, used throughout the elder classes of the Catholic schools, in which you will find every commandment at full length, with the divisions of St. Augustine : and when you receive this catechism, Mr. Grant, perhaps you will reflect, that this division was made by the very one among the ancient fathers, whom your Church delights to claim, and that this rule having been adopted several centuries before that Church existed, its members should pause before they attack this division, as some new and crafty device of papists : they should reflect, that, whether St. Jerome or St. Augustine were correct, the difference is not one of faith ; that the spirit of the Decalogue remains the same, and calls aloud to the Protestant, ‘Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.’”

“The constant misapprehension of Protestants,” said Lady Winefride, “excites one’s continued pity and surprise. A very intelligent and well-informed lady of my acquaintance, accompanied me to mass a few Sundays since, and afterwards expressed her great regret that, in the Nicene Creed, which is retained word for word in her Church, we Catholics should all have knelt at the words, ‘born of the Virgin Mary.’ I observed

that she might have perceived the greater number prepare to kneel at the previous sentence, ‘ And was incarnate of the Holy Ghost,’ and showed her the Missal, by which she perceived that the congregation had moved at the above words only that they might be all on their knees when those were said which she saw printed in capitals, ‘ AND WAS MADE MAN ;’ while any remaining doubt was removed by this note : ‘ Here all kneel, to adore the ineffable mystery of the Incarnation.’ ”

## CHAPTER XX.

In meekness and in love she stood,  
A thing of mortal care,  
But pure and strong is womanhood  
In faithfulness and prayer.

*Stebbing.*

THE Countess Angela had now finished her retreat, and, with it, the nine days' prayer, when, with her meek eyes filled with grateful happy tears, she laid the letter to her cousin Eustace on the table before the reverend mother, to take its turn with others. These others, however, were necessarily to be read by the superior, while that of the Countess was submitted only from a feeling of deep love and respect towards her, whom she considered as her first earthly friend. The venerable lady smiled as she perused it, but, as she closed it, said, "I could not alter a line. Bless you my sweet enthusiast!" and the letter was despatched. Two days more and De Grey was master of its contents; but a week elapsed before he was again on the road to Burnleigh. The weather, during that past week, had been unseasonably hot and damp; the soft and incessant rain had confined every one to the

house ; and Geraldine, who had felt every mental disquietude increased by physical ailment, hailed with thankfulness a violent thunder storm, which at length relieved the atmosphere. Well defended against the now bracing air, she escaped alone from the cottage, and sought, as the driest walk, a gravel terrace which overlooked the winding and picturesque road from Elverton to Burnleigh. That road also led from De Grey's dwelling, and it was not without an expectation of seeing either a messenger or himself pass into Burnleigh, that Geraldine cast an inquiring eye towards the spot whence a horseman could first be seen, when, just as she turned from her post of observation, De Grey stood before her.

" Pardon me, Miss Carrington," said he, observing her start and colour, " I ought to feel as a culprit intruding thus on your solitude ; but, after some hours' conversation with my aunt, I have left her, to seek you, and bid you personally farewell, before leaving England for—America. . . .

" America !" repeated Geraldine, much surprised.

" Yes, America. We, novices, in the diplomacy, cannot choose where to go, or what post to fill. I am offered, by the present minister of the Colonies, the secretaryship to Mr. —, and my acceptance, after some days' hesitation, was given . . . yesterday."

Geraldine marked the agitation with which these last words were uttered, and instantly held out her hand to De Grey, saying kindly, "I understand, and feel for you."

He pressed her hand to his lips, but, instantly resigning it, continued for some instants silent, while he led the way to a dry and sheltered alcove, into which they entered. "Leave England!" thought Geraldine, "accept a diplomatic post abroad for an indefinite period. The Countess Angela then follows her vocation; but does this decision affect him so very deeply? I have sometimes thought otherwise—or have those vile calumnies driven him to this step!"

At length De Grey spoke, in the slow calm tone of one who has endured much, and has resolved to endure more. "Angela has decided," said he, "according to the dictates of her conscience, and will find perfect peace. The letter which informed me of this, I have answered in person. We have parted, and with less emotion than I now feel in the remembrance." De Grey here paused, and Geraldine, finding it impossible to speak, waited till he should have recovered his self-command. "Angela's continuance at N—— Convent," continued he, "will, of course, be a thing of notoriety. Evil tongues will not be silent. Few will believe that one so fitted to adorn the world would have left it, but through some bitter disappoint-



ment ; and already have I heard that I am the one to drive her there, by my preference for another. Angela has chosen a retreat, where, if these cruel calumnies reach her, they will affect her not. But there is another being—one left exposed to the cold slanderous world, whom my present state of liberty would still further injure. For her alone I leave England.”

“ Sir Eustace,” replied Geraldine, whose heart responded to this frank and generous avowal, “ I am aware that my change of religion has been attributed to motives and feelings unworthy of me, and whatever shafts may yet be hurled at the wounded deer I am prepared to bear them. Still, when I reflect on the dishonour done to religion by even the appearance of evil on the part of its professors, I ought not perhaps to bear this further stigma, that I, or rather my paltry acres, have severed two fond hearts. I accept, therefore, the cruel kindness you offer me of your banishment from England. Your absence, also, will make the task to the Countess Angela a more easy one, if indeed she be resolved upon this final step.”

“ I should never attempt to change her resolution,” said De Grey ; for if I could not form her happiness, she never could form mine. And now, Miss Carrington, farewell ! May your noble courage in tribulation be rewarded by the bright sunshine you so richly deserve. I shall hear of you,

and unless," added he with a faint smile, "you also should retire to a cloister, I shall perhaps one day see you again."

"Stay," said Geraldine, "let me thank you before you go, for all your disinterested kindness towards me, for the books and instruction you have given me, and for the introduction to this valued friend whose grateful guest I am. If, by the command of my father, I am to be parted from her and my other Catholic friends, they will, I trust, pray for me—indeed at all events I need prayers," added she, the tears, in spite of her utmost efforts, rushing to her eyes.

"Now Heaven preserve my courage and honour against those tears," silently prayed De Grey. "You have, and will ever have, the prayers of your Catholic friends, Miss Carrington, and rest assured that, not only in the little Chapel of Burnleigh, but on the other side of the Atlantic, those prayers will continue with unabated fervour. Pray likewise, on your part, for one of those Catholic friends—Once more farewell! Almighty God, protect, comfort, and bless you," and without venturing again to take Geraldine's hand, De Grey left the alcove.

"There is then one mind and one heart that can fully understand mine," thought Geraldine, as she watched De Grey's retreating figure through the leafless shrubs, "and I, thank Heaven, can under-

stand the honour and the delicacy of his ! Countess Angela, your's must be indeed a true vocation !” Geraldine's next thoughts were devoted to Lady Winefride, at whose door, on re-entering the house, she remained for some instants, without venturing to knock, and when at length she did so repeatedly, she received no answer. “Then she must be in the Chapel,” thought our heroine, and passing immediately into the tribune from her own room, it was there she found her friend. After remaining a short time longer in prayer, Lady Winefride retired from the tribune, beckoning Geraldine to follow her back into her apartment. Directly they had shut the outer door, and were secure from observation, Geraldine threw herself into Lady Winefride's arms, exclaiming, “Dearest friend, I feel that you forgive me for being the innocent cause of your bereavement; but oh ! how wretched does it make me to cause your sorrow.”

Lady Winefride pressed her closely to her bosom, and wept; then rousing herself, she said, “Do you not think it would do us both good to pass a few days at N—— Convent, before Angela takes the habit?”

“Oh ! it will be the only thing that can interest me,” cried Geraldine; “how delightful, how soothing ! But you, Lady Winefride, will it be all this to you?”

“Yes,” replied her Ladyship, “a visit to N——

will recruit my spirits, as it always does ; and the happiness of Angela will raise my thoughts from this grief of earthly parting. We shall be set at liberty from guests and other engagements after next Tuesday, the feast of the Epiphany, and I will write to beg an invitation from Reverend Mother, before the post leaves Burnleigh to-night."

This arrangement was now the engrossing subject of Geraldine's thoughts. To visit a Convent would have been great pleasure and excitement, but to be an inmate, during some days, within its walls of enclosure, was perfect delight. She should then also behold and converse with the woman whom Eustace De Grey had loved—the woman who had had the courage to reject him, for this wondrous, this mysterious life of a nun. All the Protestant romances she had ever read, and could remember, were again thought over. Horrors, equivalent to the late inventions from America, rose to her mind, but it was now no easy task to terrify Geraldine respecting the hidden wickedness of anything Catholic ; and when, on the day appointed for their reception at N—, they stopped, after three days' easy travelling, at the lodge gates of the avenue leading to the Convent, her heart glowed with the same awe and delight, as if she had expected an interview with some of the "just made perfect." The Convent was a low red build-

ing, standing in extensive pleasure grounds. A double range of octagon bay windows ran along the south front of the Convent; and in the same aspect, but nearly hidden by a screen of trees and shrubs, was the line of building forming the dormitories and cells of the nuns. Isolated as was this Convent, with its avenue of two miles, and its woods and fields around it, there were no walls of enclosure and no gratings—a mitigation of conventual strictness which might have disappointed our heroine, had she not overlooked it, in the realization of her expectations in other respects. At a small side door the carriage had stopped, and a tall pale graceful portress, the very ‘beau ideal’ of a faded nun, appeared, and with smiling courtesy welcomed the travellers into a little room immediately adjoining the entrance, called the “new parlour,” where she left her guests, in order to inform the Mother Prioress, and the Countess Angela, of their arrival. Geraldine trembled with nervous excitement, and asked Lady Winefride, who was tranquilly warming herself by the fire, whether, as there were no candles or lamps, she might not raise a brighter blaze by which to see the nuns. This was scarcely achieved, when a little figure, gliding into the room, was folded in Lady Winefride’s arms, and, after a long embrace, it was Geraldine’s turn to be greeted by Angela De Grey. The cherub notes, which Lady Winefride

had once spoken of, were recalled to Geraldine, as she at length listened to this vision of her imagination. She could scarcely reply to all the kindness which flowed from the lips of this seemingly ethereal being, and found it more easy to receive the welcome from the Reverend Mother, who now entered the room, and whose dignity, sweetness, and humility, at once gained Geraldine's confidence and esteem. After some interesting conversation between the Reverend Mother and Lady Winefride, relative to the choice which the Countess Angela had made, during which Geraldine felt much flattered to be thus treated as a friend, Sister Gertrude, the same nun who had received them at their arrival, came to inform the Mother Prioress that a party, who had been visiting at the Convent, was on the point of departure, and wished to pay their parting thanks for her hospitality. "This party is well known to your Ladyship," said the Reverend Mother, addressing Lady Winefride; "amongst them is the interesting Emily G——, whose health compels her to leave our noviceship. Her spirits are much depressed, and perhaps you will give her the unexpected pleasure of seeing you?"

To this the latter consented, and it was arranged that Geraldine was to remain in the little parlour with the Countess Angela, till they should be summoned to the evening repast.

“At length I see and know you!” exclaimed the ardent Geraldine, when the two new friends were left alone. “Yes! you realize all I had conceived of purity and holy love; let me be where I can look up to you in posture as in thought:” and sinking from the chair in which she had been placed, Geraldine seated herself on a low stool at the Countess Angela’s feet. But this tribute only drew the latter to fall on her knees by Geraldine, saying, “Not to me... Oh! never again speak thus to me. Alas! I have often faltered in the full radiance of light; you have kept firm footing when the day-star was but dimly seen. Oh! that I could express to you what I feel when I behold those who have been converted. The joy on their account, the humiliation on my own; the assurance that, if free from worldly motives, they have, in this step, responded to God’s electing love; the dread that early sympathies and impressions may alone have kept me in the truth, the awful responsibility of the well instructed Catholic!—Could I have done as you have done—God only knows!”

“Do you speak thus,” said Geraldine, “when you are about to advance a step from which I shrink; when you are on the eve of a renouncement, in which I cannot even sympathize?—it is to me so wonderful, so superhuman!”

The Countess smiled, while Geraldine, still

grasping her hand, continued, "What you Catholics are brought up to think so holy, yet so simple, a life, Protestants are taught to look upon in a totally different light. For us there is so much to be forgotten of early impressions, before the real position of the monastic life can be justly and impartially weighed. I have hitherto considered a woman's highest duties to be those of domestic life. I have viewed her as born to fulfil these natural claims on her heart, and I own that the duties, to which every Protestant girl is taught to look—I call them *duties*, but"—here Geraldine stopped, her face crimsoned with blushes—"but, in this solitude, to you alone I confess, that I could not renounce the joys of being a wife—a mother."

The Countess Angela kissed Geraldine's glowing brow, and replied, "Does God call on all to serve Him in the same capacity? Were not the Saints of old, Saint Anna, Saint Elizabeth, holy in the state of matrimony? Were not Saint Monica, Saint Helena, Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, Saint Frances de Chantal, wives and mothers? Let every state and every rank give glory to God."

"And yet," said Geraldine, "you are seeking something beyond."

"Almighty God has shown me the path of life in which to serve and glorify Him," replied the



Countess. "The superior part of my soul, as divines would call it, aspires after that entire freedom from earthly ties and affections, that perfect union with Christ my Lord by which my life shall be hid in Him. This has become, blessed be His name, the enduring, the unconquerable, desire of my heart. For it I renounce—I cannot call it sacrifice—my title as Canoness of the order of Saint Anne, the luxury of riches, the excitement of society—and all this you likewise are capable of renouncing: but Geraldine (let me call you thus), I now forget for ever those scarcely definable, but enchanting, dreams of earthly love, which still have power over you—I could not force myself to earthly espousals. 'My Maker is my husband, the Lord of Hosts is His name.' In the spirit of adoption alone can I be a mother. You will have glimpses of this state of feeling, and a respect for it, when you are more fully aware of that pressing onward to perfection which animates the Catholic, and have more the habit of reference to the early Christian Church. In the old Jewish Church you will have remarked, that every woman was taught to expect the possibility of her becoming the Mother of the Messiah, and the virgin death of Jephtha's daughter was mourned over as a calamity. Yet, when our adorable Saviour did appear, it was as the infant of one who had consecrated herself in purity to God, and to whom marriage was but

a guardianship and a name. She led the holy train, whose privilege it will be to follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, for they are Virgins."

"You receive that verse in its literal sense," said Geraldine, "while I have always taken it figuratively. If, indeed, so high a reward be promised to the Virgin state, I can no longer wonder at your choice; but the principal objection in the minds of Protestants to the monastic life, and I confess it to be my own, is the withdrawing from active benevolence and usefulness to a life of selfish devotion, so that the light, which is commanded to shine before men, these pious but mistaken devotees hide under the bushel."

"Pardon me," returned the Countess, "if I remind you of that high example which sanctions, far beyond any isolated sentence from His instructions, a life of retirement and prayer. Our divine Saviour, until the age of thirty, was a recluse; so also was he, of whom it is said, that 'none born of woman was greater.' During that period, our Lord gave no public instruction, he set forth no copy, but he prayed for mankind. His holy Mother pondered on His words, and kept them in her heart, during a life of obscurity, and that model for all penitents, Saint Mary Magdalene, in preferring a life of humble meditation, was declared by her Master to have chosen 'the better part.' Now,

this better part was not a preference for religion, in contrast to the sinful pleasures of life, for Martha was also a great saint, and we are told that Jesus Christ loved her. It was a preference for meditation and prayer, beyond the active duties of life : and now, dear and interesting friend, let me assure you again, that in following St. Martha, you will ‘do well,’ and that, in following St. Mary, to ‘the better part,’ it must be the free and irrepressible desire of your soul : for you would not otherwise be permitted by your Director to take one step towards the monastic life. But what you mentioned just now of the life of selfish devotion, demands a few more words of comment. Protestants are much mistaken in supposing, that the life of a nun consists solely in meditation and prayer. Education, both of the higher and lower classes of youth, forms a prominent part in the active duty of the sisterhood of almost every order ; while household duties, various works of art, and the music of the choir, fill up the hours of a day, which is found only too short. The weeks, the months, glide away imperceptibly, from the very circumstance of a monotony ever busy, of a routine in which every talent bestowed by God is offered, either direct to Himself, or to those of whom He has said, ‘In as much as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren, ye did it unto me.’”

As the Countess finished these words, the por-

dress opened the door, and a dignified and venerable ecclesiastic entered, announced as the ‘ Right Reverend Dr. Yorke,’ whom, therefore, Geraldine knew to be the vicar-apostolic of the district to which that county belonged. This was the first time that Geraldine had met an English Catholic Bishop; and as she watched the Countess Angela kneel to receive his blessing, and the sign of the cross with which he accompanied the low yet solemn words, Geraldine’s heart glowed, and her eyes filled with happy tears. “ This is one,” thought she, “ who really receives in full belief the sevenfold gifts of the spirit.”

“ Miss Carrington,” said the Countess, “ allow me to present you to our bishop, Dr. Yorke:” and as Geraldine advanced to meet this mild and benevolent successor of the apostles, she longed to throw herself at his feet, to pour forth all her highly wrought feelings, and to hear him call her, as he had done the Countess, “ my good child.” A foreign girl would have done so: but our English heroine, with a heart as warm, found it so impossible to conquer her habits of self-control, that she simply courtesied as the bishop took her hand; and the Countess said, “ My lord, you must frequently have heard of the only daughter of General Carrington, niece also to the Warden of —, who, after deep research, and great conflict of mind, has become virtually a Catholic; for her delay in

entering the Church is only from respect towards her father, who is expected to arrive from Madrid in the course of the year; and then," added she tenderly to Geraldine, "we shall claim you."

"Young lady," said the bishop, in his quiet and primitive manner, "Bless Almighty God! but bless Him in humility and silence. Let no unguarded and mistaken praise on the part of your Catholic friends, or opposition and reproach on that of Protestants, betray you into forgetfulness of your dependance on the Divine Providence that has hitherto conducted you. It will be safer for you to hide the grace of devotion, than to be elevated by it—to ponder on the great things done for your soul, than to speak of them. Imitate our blessed lady, who kept the words of her divine son in her heart, as too precious to be scattered to the world, until He should see fit. Let this be your part until the return of General Carrington."

"It shall, my lord," replied Geraldine.

"Your friend is right," resumed the bishop, "in taking for granted that I have heard of your courage in venturing to be a Catholic. Now, pray for the more rare grace of humility. Nature would bid you to be willing that all those, who may now claim you as their sister in Christ, should show you admiration and respect: but I pray that grace may enable you faithfully to attribute all honour and glory to God's electing love! Remember also

the great responsibility of knowing the truth, and say in your heart, ‘ Let thy work, O Lord, be extolled, and not mine. Let thy holy name be blessed, but to me let nothing be attributed of the praises of men ! ’ ”

“ Miss Carrington does not seek for applause,” said the Countess, fearful least, in spite of the gentle manner in which all this was said, Geraldine might be hurt.

“ Child ! ” said the bishop, “ I do not reprove, where nothing calls for reproof. I merely warn this precious soul of the dangers besetting it, for, believe me, that she who is divested of self, even in her last hour, is a great saint.”

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

Higher and yet more high ;  
Shake off the cumbering chain which earth would lay  
On your victorious wings ; mount ! mount ! Your way  
Is through eternity !

*Hemans.*

A SUMMONS was now given to the “old parlour,” to the substantial evening repast—the procuratrix presiding at the bottom of the table, and the confessor at the top, an arrangement which offended Geraldine’s chivalrous notions respecting the deference to be paid by the other sex to woman. Introductions now followed ; but, to the regret of all the party, the bishop’s carriage was in readiness, and he obliged to return to —, whence he had come to administer confirmation on the previous day. His lordship again spoke kindly to Geraldine, and, as he turned to the Catholics assembled, she cried, “Oh, let me, let me have the blessing likewise !” and knelt as did the rest, to receive the parting benediction.

That night was Geraldine charmed to lie awake. To have slept would have been to waste those hours of wonderment, in which her own painful

identity was forgotten. The main body of the convent, from which the out-quarters were detached, stood dark and majestic in the moonlight. On one side of the court was the range of the upper and lower dormitories, with their double row of cells. All now lay hushed and apparently in repose,—but was it indeed so? were all those hearts at peace? Oh, that she could know the secret history of each recluse! From her little bed she gazed long on that most interesting side of the building. The clock too seemed the most romantic clock she had ever heard, with its stroke at every seven minutes and a half, and its busy summing up of quarters and half hours, and when she dozed for an instant, it roused her; till, after the hours of night had passed, but not a ray of daylight was visible, it struck four, and immediately the great bell rang for matins. Geraldine sprang from her bed to the window. She saw to her delight the twinkling lights in the cells; but she felt, at the same time, the chill of the early winter's morning; and creeping back to the warmth of her bed, she lay in a theoretic extacy, enduring mortification and performing obedience by proxy, while Angela De Grey, who, in spite of the clock, had slept soundly, now arose; for, although not yet admitted to the privileges of the choir, she had begun, during the short time which intervened before taking the habit, to practise all the auste-



rities which belonged to the life she desired to lead.

“ I think I could live here for ever !” exclaimed Geraldine, after the close of another day, which had been full of the greatest spiritual enjoyment. “ Oh ! Lady Winefride, I cannot help thinking that you have been divinely directed to bring me here ; and should my father cast me off, it is to this convent I will come for my earthly home.”

Lady Winefride had promised to be present at the Countess Angela’s “ cloathing,” which is the religious ceremony the most imposing to the world, when the bridal garments are exchanged for the black serge of the nun. But this admission to the rank of novice could not take place till the postulant had gone through several months of probation ; and, accordingly, on the day previous to that on which Angela was to enter on all the duties of her new life, Lady Winefride purposed to leave the hospitable quarters of the convent. Geraldine had expected a heart-rending scene between the aunt and niece ; but not a tear was shed, though a rather suspicious red tinged the lids of the former as she entered the parlour with the future “ Sister Mary Joseph.”

“ What a name !” exclaimed Geraldine ; “ what could induce you, Countess, surrounded as you are by those beautiful conventual names, joined in every variety, to take the name of Joseph ?”

“He is a glorious saint,” replied Angela De Grey; “the pure and faithful guardian of our blessed Lady, he to whom her Divine Son consented to be subject while on earth. He cannot ask amiss, and I never yet invoked him in vain. It is a holy name in religion, and I consider myself most fortunate, that, when poor Mother Mary Joseph died, the last infirmarian, reverend mother kept the name for me. When you come to us,” added she, smiling, “we will be careful to select some of your favorite names for your choice. What think you of Aloysia Theresa?”

“Ah!” cried Geraldine more gravely, and looking round the old parlour; “something seems to tell me that I am not to leave these old walls for very long. In fact, what is the world to me, but for one being! and he, perhaps, about to cast me off.” She then looked from the parlour window into that of the refectory, in which stood the reading desk, where, during the meals, the younger nuns and novices read aloud. “There is much, very much, that I should love in this life,” added she.

“But that feeling is not sufficient,” observed Angela. “No one who came to a convent merely from an indefinite love of repose and religious leisure, or from temporary disgust of the world, would ever remain to be professed.”

“But my feelings are deeper than you suppose, respecting a hidden yet active life,” said GERAL-

dine; "and I look on you as truly a privileged being."

"How can I ever sufficiently thank Him, who has thus chosen me," said Angela, clasping her hands, and raising her eyes, now full of tears, to heaven.

"You will write, dear child, after you have been a month in the noviceship," said Lady Winefride, giving the last embrace, as the travelling carriage drove to the door; and, after a long and tender farewell between the two younger friends, Geraldine tore herself away, and the travellers rapidly returned, through the convent avenue, on the road to London, while Angela, after breathing a fervent prayer for the spiritual welfare of each, banished them from her thoughts, and went in search of Mother Agatha, the mistress of the novices, to confer with her on the duties of the morrow.

After a few days passed in Berkeley Square, Lady Winefride, finding that Geraldine felt much repugnance to returning to the neighbourhood of Elverton, until Sir Eustace should have left England, proposed that they should take a circuitous route home, by the sea coast: and Geraldine, who wished to escape from London acquaintances, almost as much as she dreaded those of her country neighbourhood, joyfully consented. Accordingly, having given the date of their probable

arrival at each place to General Carrington's agent, that the expected letter from Spain might be instantly forwarded, they left London for Sussex; and Geraldine then gave herself up to the charm of repose from stir and excitement, and determined to enjoy the freshness of these, to her, new scenes.

"How magnificent, how boundless, how catholic, is this vast ocean," cried she, one night, when gazing on it from their temporary dwelling; "how refreshing to my soul is its expansion. Lady Winefride, do come once more to the window, and let us carry on the analogy." But Lady Winefride was so intently reading the foreign news in the paper, that she did not at first hear the request, and, when she did so, it was principally to oblige her, on whom she feared many afflictions were still to fall; and she sate, holding Geraldine's hand in hers, and looking out with her on that clear mild night, while the latter continued to indulge her poetical imagination in many beautiful comparisons and illustrations; and Lady Winefride, beguiled from the rough and jarring turmoil of public affairs, to sympathy in the ideal of nature, at length challenged her young friend to express gratitude for that elastic imagination which cheered her on her journey of life.

"Imagination," said Geraldine, putting her hand to her forehead, and pondering.—"Imagination is not the word I should wish to use, could I

but find a better to express the sentiment, the feeling, the faculty. I know not what it is in me, that finds kindred but rarely in men or books—but lights on it in nature—in music—in painting—in sculpture—seldom in poetry—although it seems to be the poetry of all things beautiful, and such I have called it to myself. Yet there is a yearning of the heart towards these unknown sympathies, that is inexplicable, that is far beyond poetry.”

“It is,” said Lady Winefride, “the trace of the Divinity, after which your soul pants; it is dimly yet truly discerned in the wreck of beauty and purity of this fallen earth.”

“Yes,” exclaimed Geraldine, “you are right! and this vague perception of something lost before it was known, this tremulous grasp of heaven’s shadows passing over the objects of sight—this listening for tones which seem to mingle then to leave the harmonies of earth—this intercourse in language of no sound or memory—this interchange of sympathy, followed by the blank of desertion—all this proves the soul of man to have departed from, but not totally to have lost, the heavenly intercourse he held in Paradise. Yes, it must be so! else why the gush of tears which often follows the contemplation of infancy asleep; is it not that this baptismal innocence speaks to our soul of what we once were, of what God would have us to be, of what, if faithful, we are destined to become, by

union with him who is unsullied purity? I have heard," continued she, "that some divines have supposed the privation of heaven to constitute the extreme woe of hell. 'The pain of loss,' I think they call it;—is it not something of this nature which you suppose to constitute the restlessness of the soul on earth?"

"With this difference," replied Lady Winefride, "that, in the eternal 'pain of loss,' all hope is gone, while on earth, and during the purgatorial detention in the separate state, we are full of hope in Christ, who is with his suffering members every where."

"I trust His all-powerful presence is in *that* house," said Geraldine, pointing to a handsome edifice, to which her attention had been for some time directed, and Lady Winefride gazed now with her on the open windows of the upper room, by which female figures passed stealthily at intervals, their shadows being dimly seen by the subdued light of the lamp within. It was the death-room of one, who, in the prime of manhood, and with a form modelled to strength and beauty, had wasted by a local and virulent disease. The bed was perfumed, and the attached, though sensitive, attendants, had each a flower or flask, as, with a conviction of eternity's approach, they closed round the dear object of so much and long tried sympathy and love. Relief to the sufferer, and safety

to the group around him, had compelled the free admission of air, and every window was thrown up to the gentle coming of the southern breeze, from an ocean glittering in calm delight under a full unclouded moon. Alas ! Nature, thou art a fond but capricious mother to thy equally wayward children ! Man smiles, and would rejoice—and thou dost cast around him whirlwinds, the thunder and the flood. Again he muses, and is sad ; whilst in thy gayest mood, sparkling and carolling in extacy, thou canst not give him sympathy ! Not so the mother of this dying man, who, planted at the pillow's head, watched silently. Her's had been the active post till now ; long journeys into foreign lands, for change of clime and discipline ; converse and books, and seeming cheerfulness, as time rolled on, bearing no remedy ; and round the sick couch next were placed, when books and converse failed, flowers and birds, and golden fish, each in their turn attracting for a time the listless eye of pain. But was this all ? Oh no ! That mother's care extended far beyond the soothing tenderness of human thought ; and often from her lips to his attentive ear, the prayer of faith and resignation rose to Him who chastens but in mercy. Still to the Protestant all suffering is mysterious. He does not hold its expiatory effect. He does not admit the consolation, that every pang on this side of the grave, if borne for Christ, lessens

“the pain of loss,” which the soul, detained in Purgatory, must feel, until the heavy debt of sin is paid unto the uttermost farthing. He is meek and resigned, nay more, he is heroic, under bodily torments; but he cannot rejoice that these “afflictions” will bring him *sooner* to his “eternal weight of glory.” He cannot exclaim with the Catholic, “Oh Lord! what have I done that thou shouldst treat me as thou treatest thy chosen servants, that thou shouldst favour me with this external and internal woe!”



## CHAPTER XXI.

Art thou come from the far-off land at last,  
Thou that hast wandered long ;  
Thou hast come to a home whence the smile hath passed  
With the merry voice of song.

*Hemans.*

Two months had now passed, since Geraldine had left Elverton Hall, when on entering the sitting-room at the hotel, one morning, at St. Leonard's, she perceived the long-expected letter from her father's agent. She instantly seized it, but found that it contained no enclosure ; and, half relieved, half disappointed, she broke the seal, and read as follows :—

“ Madam,—General Carrington arrived on Monday, the 12th instant, at Portsmouth, and was in London last night. His return has been hastened, as I understand, by the receipt of a letter from yourself. I have the pleasure of announcing him to be in perfect health. He purposes being at the Hall on Thursday, his business with me requiring no longer stay in town. I beg to offer my congratulations ; and remain, &c.

“ JAMES THORNTON.”

Two hours after this, Geraldine and her deeply anxious friend were again in their travelling carriage, rapidly traversing the cross-country into Staffordshire.

“Not one line from himself!” at length exclaimed the terror-stricken Geraldine. “Never have I felt my strength, both of mind and body, so totally fail me. I have no cue for my future line of conduct: a vague sense of coming misery is all I can feel. A father in wrath is an awful being.”

“And He for whom you brave his wrath, is a still more awful Being,” replied Lady Winefride.

“Oh, yes!” said Geraldine; “if I can but act up to my convictions, if I be but faithful to the light given me, I shall be supported. But my brain reels.”

“Suppose we begin our usual Litany,” said Lady Winefride, “on this first stage of our journey. Great calm and strength follow the due performance of our ordinary duty.”

This journey from Sussex into Staffordshire, took place on the day preceding that on which General Carrington had purposed being at his home, and it required rapid and late travelling, to arrive even at Burnleigh to sleep. This, however, was accomplished, and, at eleven o’clock, Geraldine was once more under the roof of her friend, and laid her exhausted head on her pillow.

“Who am I?” and “where am I?” were her mental queries, on first waking to consciousness: but all she knew, and all she feared to know, soon rushed on her. Her father’s image filled her mind, and so absorbed her, as to make her incapable of receiving comfort even from the presence of Mr. Everard, who was awaiting her in the breakfast room. “Well!” cried he, “I am come to ride with you as far as the Park gates; for my conscience tells me that I have partly helped you into this scrape, and heaven knows, that any thing to give you comfort would be a cordial to me. So the General says nothing?” Geraldine, perfectly subdued, could only weep: but she wept principally to find herself so powerless in her wonted energy and self-command; so perfectly unable to act the part she had assigned herself, and which she felt due to the great cause she had espoused. She had intended to appear before her father in the meek yet calm dignity resulting from the elevation of her thoughts, and the utter disengagement of her affections from all earthly things: but this seemed destined not to be, for this self-dignity and esteem, this pride of adversity, required to be humbled, that the offering might be further purified, which God had accepted of her. “Oh, how deceitful is that courage of the flesh, which ventures all, which bears all, and is well pleased with itself for never

hesitating ! Oh, how it nourishes self-confidence, and a certain upliftedness of heart ! This courage, which often wonderfully edifies the public, hugs within it a certain satisfaction, that is a subtle poison : but a soul that is weakened and humbled, that no longer finds any refuge in herself, that fears, that is troubled, that is sorrowful even to death, that cries out, in fine, as Jesus Christ did on the cross, ‘ My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me ? ’ that soul is much more purified, more loosened from herself, more annihilated to all self-desire, than strong souls, who enjoy in peace the fruits of their virtue. Happy, then, the soul, which God casts down and bruises, from which God has taken away all strength in herself, that she may no longer support herself, but lean on Him, who sees and pities her poverty ; the soul which is content to bear not only the crosses from without, but the great internal cross of discouragement with which all the others would weigh as nothing !”\*

“ I must not let you dwell too long on one only theme,” said Mr. Everard, at length, as Geraldine continued to weep ; “ let me tell you all the news I can, before you again journey forth. In the first place, the new ministry is broken up, so that our friend’s wild plan of starting for America,

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\* “ Treatise on Dejection,” by Fenelon.

is knocked on the head. I met him yesterday, to laugh at him, and to offer him, on behalf of the new ministry, some clerk's office in New Zealand, should the Antipodes prove far enough." Mr. Everard's purpose was effected: he saw that he had roused Geraldine's attention, and he continued: "Geraldine, listen to me, for I speak with the authority of a faithful friend. You have determined on a step, in taking which, all those who know your father, tremble for you; while, from a mistaken sense of punctilious honour, you are about to drive away from his family and his country, one who would supply to you that father's place, for Eustace De Grey loves you, Geraldine Carington, and, by the civil death of the Countess Angela, will be a match for any heiress in the kingdom."

"Mr. Everard," said she, "I understand too well the noble mind of him to whom you allude, not to feel that *he* would never make this avowal of attachment to me; why then tell me that which I ought never to have known?"

"I will tell you why," replied Mr. Everard: "because I am weary of seeing you wretched, and making every one else so. You must be conscious that De Grey would prize you for yourself, and reckon himself possessed of a boundless treasure, were he to receive you portionless from an irritated father: but portionless you should never be. Who

could be so dear to my old heart as the child of my first and only love?"

This generous declaration touched Geraldine's grateful and filial heart. She took the old man's hand, and kissed it; but at length she said; "Should my father pardon me, and consent to my becoming a Catholic, I should feel bound, in filial duty, to follow his wishes in every other respect. It is not probable, from his estrangement from Sir Hugh De Grey, that our union could give him aught but pain; and if I am to be an outcast from my father's house, I prefer the refuge of a convent."

"Never!" cried Mr. Everard. "These dreams must be given up. Your father still loves the memory of Hugh De Grey. Religious disputes were the cause of the estrangement; he only wishes for an opportunity of reconciliation; but more of this hereafter. Promise me, Geraldine, that, should the General favour your union with a Catholic, you will then remember Eustace."

"I think I may safely promise that," said Geraldine, sadly smiling.

"By the bye," continued he, "there has been a circumstance mentioned to me, which, if it be true, will change the gossip of the neighbourhood considerably. Pray have you ever known the secret, disclosed by the General's confidential servant in her death-bed confession? I mean the housekeeper, old Goodwin."

“ How could I ever know it,” said Geraldine, “ if made in confession ? I remember the excitement caused at the time amongst the household, and concluded that various improbable stories would be invented ; but the Warden supposed poor Goodwin to be delirious, and therefore to rave about the person to whom she was the most fondly attached.”

“ Well,” said Mr. Everard, “ that same paper which attacked De Grey, has now given the public some fine verses about the General’s having been wrecked on the ‘ Goodwin sands ! ’ ”

“ If it be,” said Geraldine, “ that a second marriage has been formed, and an heir born to the estates of Elverton, what an irksome load of responsibility will be removed from me ! How my heart will yearn towards a tie I have never known ! Oh ! how could my father doubt my love for a young brother ! ”

Mr. Everard was silent, for he felt that, if there were truth in the report, it belonged to the father to disclose his own secret to his child. Lady Winefride had purposely left Mr. Everard to speak alone with Geraldine, little conscious of the topics he had chosen ; but she now entered to secure a few minutes with her loved guest, before parting, and to suggest some subjects on which to dwell during her drive to Elverton Hall. Geraldine still trembled and wept, but she had accepted from God this further trial of the loss of her moral and

intellectual strength, and her tears fell without bitterness. Lady Winefride was deeply affected—more deeply than those who best knew her had ever seen her moved, and Mr. Everard seemed scarcely to know which to comfort and support. His hesitation, however, was but for a moment, and he followed Geraldine to her carriage, where, on account of the presence of Mrs. Kelsoe, the conversation was continued in French.

At the Lodge gates of Elverton Hall, Geraldine received the last friendly grasp from her old friend, who walked thence into the town, and, with her attendants only, she drove up to the entrance door of her home. “Is my father arrived?” was her first breathless inquiry. “No, ma’am, the General’s directions are for dinner at eight o’clock, and it has only just struck six.”

This was a reprieve. Geraldine alighted, and some feeling of vigour and strength returned from the power of association, as she crossed the hall and entered the saloon, both of which were in a blaze of light. She observed also that the conservatory was thrown open, that the men-servants were in their dress liveries, and that all spoke of joyful greeting to the long absent master of Elverton.

“This is just as it ought to be,” said Geraldine to the steward, who followed her for sanction and applause. “This should be—this *is* a gala day;



but I hope that Mrs. Kelsoe has been equally thoughtful. Tell her that I will dress directly."

"Plait my hair, Kelsoe, as it used to be dressed, when my father left me—"à la Grecque"—and fasten it with the long gold arrow that was my mother's. For the rest I care not—but tell Mr. Hilton, if he hear the distant sound of a carriage, not to take every servant to the hall door, but to remember that I am beyond the reach of any sound from the avenue, and to send some one directly to me."

Half an hour from that time, the active though trembling fingers of Mrs. Kelsoe had accomplished their task; and Geraldine, dressed in black velvet, with her hair arranged as she had directed, and her father's last gift, a superb bracelet, on her arm, descended to the saloon. Another half hour passed, during which Geraldine recognised the hand-writing of Katherine Graham, and of other familiar friends, in the address of several letters which lay awaiting her notice; but she could open none, her whole soul was absorbed by conjectures of what would be her father's conduct. She could form no plan for herself. Would he take no notice of her letter, and meet her as if nothing had happened? But then he had his own secret to impart, and, from what Mr. Everard had further told her in the carriage, the revealing it, had become a matter of necessity, as well as one of bit-

terness. "Thank God," she cried at length, "for that sympathy which is implanted throughout His Church ! Thank God for the communion of saints, and that, bewildered as I am, and incapable of collecting my thoughts in prayer, I have just sense enough left to say, ' Pray for me, pray for me ! ' "

The distant sounds were now heard of a carriage swiftly advancing on the smooth gravel ; then the sounds were lost ; but the opening of doors and murmuring of voices proved that others believed in its approach, and at length a loud peal at the entrance, and the rush of servants to the hall, proclaimed the arrival of General Carrington.

And where was Geraldine ? Swift as thought she had passed through the file of domestics, and, before the General had glanced around him, she had thrown herself on his bosom, and was locked in his arms.

The family welcome, first smothered from respect, then rose throughout the group of servants, and the General recognised and spoke to each in turn, as he passed, with Geraldine on his arm, to the saloon. But on how seemingly slight a cause may fresh mistrust be conveyed. Geraldine had been clasped in her father's arms ; but could he prevent it, when she had thrown herself there in the presence of all the household ? She still hung on his arm ; but that arm did not press hers, and, in

his condescending and lingering notice of the dependants, she felt that he dreaded to be alone with her. Geraldine knew her father's self-possession before witnesses, she listened to his encomiums, throughout the dinner, on the beauty, the cheerfulness, the warmth of his home, and the brilliancy of her looks; heard his praises of England, and his graphic account of most interesting scenes in the civil conflict in Spain; and was sufficiently his daughter to have regained her own outward composure, and to question him respecting his voyage, and his opinion of the state of politics in which he found his own country. The General himself asked no questions, he talked loud and with more than usual spirit, but the subjects were all on strictly neutral ground. At dessert, Mr. Hilton, the steward, was sent for, and after the usual period for her remaining in the dining-room, Geraldine withdrew.

"Does he then intend to banish the subject altogether?" thought Geraldine. But, at the close of an hour's solicitude, she was joined by her father, and one glance at his countenance sufficed to show her that he did *not* intend to banish the subject altogether. He advanced to her, as she rose, and perceiving that, notwithstanding every effort, her whole frame shook, and her lips moved convulsively from suppressed emotion, he drew her arm within his own, and walked with a determined,

and, as it seemed, stern concentrated step, into the library, the doors of which he not only shut, but bolted. Geraldine's terror returned with double force at all these precautions for an uninterrupted, unwitnessed interview; and it was by an almost superhuman effort of mind that she retained her consciousness of what passed between them. General Carrington was visibly under the influence of emotion, at least as powerful, and checked by as strong a determination of self-control. The moment when either should give way would probably be the signal for the overflow of the other's pent up feelings, and each, intuitively conscious of this, kept at bay. He pointed to a chair. Geraldine obeyed, but, as her father remained standing, she arose, pressing both her hands upon the impetuous throbbings of her heart. During the past six months, she had unceasingly, and upon principle, acted over to herself this dreaded interview. She had, in imagination, exhausted every possible turn her father's feelings might take: she had to them adapted her manner, her expressions. She had by degrees sacrificed every thing to his possible demands: she had in heart renounced her home, her fortune, the countenance and respectability of his protection, the endearments of his affection, the privilege of attending his dying bed. But, with all this preparation, little did she foresee the termination of this interview. The silence to her

tortured mind seemed endless, yet every fibre of her frame quivered, when that silence was broken.

“Geraldine!” said the General, in a low smothered voice, “have you made your abjuration?”

“No.”

“You have waited my presence?”

“I have.”

“For what purpose?”

“To gain your consent, dear father.”

“And if you had it not?”

“I had then done all I could do, as your child.”

“What next?”

“I should act openly upon my inward convictions.”

“Great God!” cried the General. His clasped hands partly concealed his face, but his daughter perceived the working of the muscles, and throbbing of the temple arteries. She now feared for him, and self was forgotten. Placing her hand gently on his arm, she murmured, “My dearest father!”

“Stop!” cried he, and the wild expression of his countenance, as suddenly he grasped her arm, gave a new turn to her fears. She must have shrieked at the torture of his iron grasp, but that her utterance was choaked: for that her father, in the delirium of disappointed pride and affection, was about to curse the child, who would disgrace him, seemed to be now the certainty disclosed to

her. Her slender form and woman's strength, utterly powerless beneath his grasp, stirred not. She felt as if she never could survive that hour, and "God alone in his eternity, she alone in her immortality," absorbed every faculty of her soul. How long an interval was thus passed in suspension between two worlds, Geraldine never knew. She was apart from time. At length, recalled to earth by the voice she had ever instinctively obeyed,— "Geraldine !" cried General Carrington, in an altered tone, and releasing her from his hold ; " Look up ! fear nothing !" And, as she opened her eyes once more, and fixed them on her father, " Geraldine," said he at length, " this hour of deep humiliation I accept in penance for the moral cowardice of my past life ; for having, during a life of fifty years, outwardly denied the faith I cherished. Come to my arms, my noble child ! Your father is A CATHOLIC !"

END OF VOL. II.









